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THE

ESSENCE, SPIRITUALITY,

AND

GLORIOUS ISSUE,

OF THE

RELIGION OF CHRIST JESUS,

TO

All God's Chosen.

EXHIBITED IN

Remarks on the Expression, "VERILY, VERILY," as used by our blessed Saviour in many parts of Scripture.

BY SAMUEL BARNARD, JUN.

The testimony of JESUS is the spirit of prophecy
REV. xix. 10.

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TO

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A YOUNG man unknown to the literary Public, and known partially only to the religious one, comes forth in this his maiden attempt; humbly desiring to be a champion for scripture truth. A motto which he trusts is indelibly engraven on his heart, is "The Testimony of Jesus is the "Spirit of Prophecy." *Worthy motto for every one who would desire under the help and guidance of the Spirit, to follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth, and who looketh upon himself as an adopted child of God!*

He conceals not his name, publishing it not, he trusts, from a proud selfish, self-honoring principle; but because he is not ashamed of the gospel of God: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth. And further, he desires to be thus humbly bold, when he sees in-

fidels, carnal reasoners, worldly-wise men, and reason taught philosophers, proud to affix their names to Works, degrading the essential and divine dignity of Christ, trampling his revelation despising his cross, blaspheming his Holy Spirit and thus openly glorying in their own shame. The world is poisoned with books, whose leading train is either gross immorality, or a specious morality which undermines principle, and aims a blow at the spirit of the gospel. Yet the Author writes not as one afraid of the success of the gospel; he knows that God's counsel shall stand, and that He will accomplish all his good pleasure.

Courteous Reader, let this suffice for a description of my Work. A work is the best description of itself—and I shall rejoice to hear my Work is approved, not for mine own, but for the Lord's sake, whose servant I am if I obey his will; whose son I am, if I acknowledge with soul-abasement yet soul-rejoicing, the kind remembrances of his fatherly hand, who seeing he could have no greater love for us, laid down his life for his friends whose heir I am, if I prize the inheritance, which he hath meritoriously purchased by his blood

whose kingdom I shall possess hrough his rich grace, and by the operation of his Spirit, if I put not the day of grace from me, the earnest of which is peace and joy in believing even here below, and the end of which is quietness and assurance for ever. I feel a hope, I write in nothing against the gospel, pity trifling errors: and that the God of all grace may enlighten us here, and at length make us meet for the inheritance of the saints in light, is the sincere prayer of*

Yours in the bonds of Christ Jesus,

THE AUTHOR.

* I have not spoken above thus conditionally, in consequence of supposing that the gospel and its attendant blessings are held out to us, on condition of our being willing to accept them. I believe life and salvation to be freely given of God, above all creature conditions and covenant of works; yea to be given even to the unwilling; not in their unwilling state, but by making them willing in the day of God's power, by the energetic and invincible operation of the Spirit of God. So that whilst our willingness does not merit or procure them conditionally; it doth yet prove how from the heart we receive them, to the praise of the glory of his grace who hath first made us accepted in the beloved.

PREFACE.

If the employment and recreation of my leisure hours, hath produced any thing that may comfort the followers of the Lamb, or bring glory to the God of Grace, I rejoice in sending this Essay forth to meet the public eye. May it not go without God's blessing, without which it is written and published in vain. It arose undesignedly at first, out of a larger work, which at present lays by me unfinished, the title of which I have intended to be, "Glorious Dispensations, or the displays "of God's Wisdom, Power and Grace, "in the Salvation of Sinners by Jesus "Christ." I feel I enter on hallowed,

but by no means forbidden ground. God, (as revealed unto us in the scriptures, through the mediatorial nature of Christ Jesus) is an object worthy to be beheld, contemplated, admired, and adored. He himself, calls upon us to behold him, in the amazing stoop and condescension of his love, to save sinners through the efficacious atonement of Christ Jesus—efficacious so completely, that of all that the Father hath given him, Christ will lose nothing, but by his great power and infinite grace, will raise them up to eternal life at the last day.

Born myself of professing parents, the preaching of the Word hath from my earliest infancy sounded in my ears.—A privilege which few but the seed of professing parents do generally possess: yet, which I feel, for a long time I slighted,

and which I should have slighted till now, but for the exceeding riches of God's grace towards me.

The subjects of which I treat, it will be observed, are all taken out of the gospel of St. John. Some may be inclined to ask why I confined myself to that gospel. I answer, because the double assertion *Verily, verily*, is not to be found to my knowledge, in any other parts of scripture. Not that the substance thereof may not be found elsewhere; for the word of God is full of Christ; and from Genesis to Revelations, presenteth his exceeding righteousness and atoning blood as the meritorious cause of a sinner's salvation, and acceptance before God. If these expressions are found in St. John, whilst they occur not in the other Evangelists, this may be the reason.—Matthew, Mark and Luke, recorded chiefly the actions, and John

chiefly the words of Christ; a dignified employment indeed was the latter, for the brother of Jesus, and the bosom-friend of God whilst in our flesh he tabernacled here below. I with John would prize the words of my once crucified, but now highly exalted Lord; and having often prayed his good Spirit to assist me in this little work, by furnishing me with ideas worthy of his great name, I send it forth imploring his blessing, and rejoicing if it shall be useful to any soul.

I said I was born of professing parents. My mother was snatched from this world when I was young, and I trust from the little I can recollect of her, and what I have heard from various quarters, that she is now joining with those who are eternally singing praises to God and to the Lamb. But grace runs not by lineal descent. The regenerate are born, not by the will

of the flesh, nor by the will of man, but "*By the Word of God, which liveth and* "*abideth for ever.*" And if any man hath cause to boast, it is not in pious descent, but in the adoption of grace, raising him higher than nature's ties can do, *viz.* to the glorious liberty of the sons of God: and this liberty delivers us, 1st. From original sin, received from our parents, and engrafted in our unfinished members, whilst forming in the womb, as an entailed curse on every one of Adam's race, because of their covenant head's transgression: 2d. From actual sin; received into our hearts by the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eye, and shewing their fruits in the pride of life—a pride which is at enmity with the living God.

I feel my work arduous, and requiring the skill of more gracious hands than mine. I ask however but one indulgence of the

Public, which is this, that they will not condemn unnecessarily, a youth who having to sustain the cares of business in some degree, and that also of a family—and who young as he is, is both an husband, and lately a father, has set down at the age of 22, to prepare for the Press, a work of such magnitude, not so much in size as in subject; and of importance, as it handles the oracles of the living God.—Young I am, in age; and young in Christian experience; few my years in this world; fewer my years in the Christian warfare; for I had attained nearly the stature of man, before I became even a babe in Christ, and desired the sincere milk of the word. A babe I am yet; but babes can lisp their father's praise; and one is my father even Christ; who is the everlasting Father, and prince of Peace.

I know what authors must expect to feel, from the eye of criticism, the smart of satire and the lash of censure: yet I would so wish to esteem as a kindness, even the reproofs of an enemy, that I might profit by them, whilst the wounds of a friend I beg to admire. The Press has many patrons of godliness; many who are on the Lord's side, who honor his name, and espouse his cause. And what will these say of me? I trust they will give me the right hand of fellowship, and acknowledge me as one who loveth the Lord Jesus in sincerity and truth. The communion of saints is prizeable, next to union with the living head, and fountain of holiness and grace. I feel this satisfaction, that the Bible hath been my guide in this work. Men may err in controversy, if they write about the Bible. But if they take the Bible for their guide, with

this earnest prayer, that the Holy Spirit may teach them the true use of it; then if they fight any battles, it may be presumed they are indeed the battles of the Lord.

Boston, May 1, 1806.

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ESSAYS, &c.

The Superiority of Divine to Human Testimony.

THE importance of any subject may most commonly be gathered, from the solemnity which those speak with, who are interested therein.—Thus among men (by the testimony of that word which is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart), "*an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all* "*strife.*" Heb. vi. 16. Oaths in the mouths of mortals, are serious things. They should be spoken with the greatest solemnity, and not without having the greatest reverence, and the most holy fear of God before our eyes: they should not be made "*by* "*Heaven, for it is God's throne: nor by the* "*earth, for it is his footstool; neither by Jerusa-*"*lem, for it is the city of the great king. Nei-*"*ther* (it is added) *shalt thou swear by thy head,* "*because thou canst not make one hair white or* "*black.*" The communication of a christian should be, "*yea, yea; nay, nay;*" nor should incredulity towards his testimony, nor disregard to his word among his fellow creatures, tempt him to depart from such godly simplicity and plainness of speech; "*for whatsoever is more than these, cometh of*"

"*evil.*" Matt. v. 34—37. And even when his authority is disputed, he should with faith, and an humble mind, commit himself, "*to him who judgeth righteously.*" 1 Pet. ii. 23. and who will finally "*avenge his own elect, which cry day and* "*night unto him, though he bear long with them.*" Luke xviii. 7. But with God it is different, who cannot (as being above all) appeal to any above himself: nor need he appeal to his own immutability and honor for his own sake, but for the satisfaction of those on whom he has deigned to exercise the greatest compassion and the tenderest love; even for those, for whose sake he gave up his own dear Son to die for their sins. And for their sakes, "*because* "*he could swear by no greater, he swear by him-* "*self*;" the purpose of which was that he might express himself, "*willing, more abundantly to shew* "*unto the heirs of promise, the immutability of* "*his counsel,*" which he therefore "*confirmed* "*by an oath:*" and the gracious intent of which was, that "*we might have a strong consolation,* "*who have fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope* "*set before us.*" Heb. vi. 13—17, 18, 19. "O "*the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and* "*knowledge of God; how unsearchable are his* "*judgments, and his ways past finding out.*" Rom. xi. 33.—O the matchless love and wisdom of God in his glorious dealings for the good of the children of men!

But these glorious dealings for our good must be

displayed to us, in a way suitable to, and guarding from every imputation the divine honour. And as no man could see the face of God, even for the purpose of receiving unmerited favor, and live; so it became necessary to have a Mediator, possessing the character of both God and man. And this has our great Mediator Christ Jesus possessed. In virtue of his essential divinity as eternal God, "*having "neither beginning of days, nor end of life,*" Heb. vii. 3. he possessed the divine character in all its inimitable, glorious, and unspotted perfections; and through his human nature, assumed entirely for our good, he possessed all the properties, passions, and inclinations of man, as far as he could assume them without partaking of our sin. And so far did he submit to be enveloped with the human nature, that he "*was in all points tempted like as "we are, yet without sin,*" Heb. iv. 15; and for this express purpose, "*that he might be a merciful "and faithful high priest in things pertaining to "God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the "people.*" Heb. ii. 17. And in this double capacity, Christ is at once "*a just God, and a Sa-"viour.*" Isa. xlv. 21.

Possessing then every adorable property which man can or ought to admire in a supreme Being, he possessed also divine and unerring wisdom, and that in the following ways and particulars.

First, In his divine nature;

He "*is a discerner of the thought and intents* "*of the heart.*" Heb. iv. 12.

Second, In his human nature,

"*Never man spake like this man.*" John vii. 46.

Third, In his mediatorial nature, or character of God-man.

"*Behold, my servant shall deal prudently.*" Isaiah lii. 13.

"*By his knowledge shall my righteous servant* "*justify many, for he shall bear their iniquities.*" Isaiah liii. 11.

A brief attention to the foregoing particulars, must suffice, before we enter fully into the substance of our subject.

First, The Lord Jesus Christ in his divine nature, knew, or was a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

Infinite knowledge is the property and prerogative of an infinite God. And this in its extent over the thoughts and words and actions of his creatures, it is the duty of a finite creature to acknowledge. In regard to actions, "*thou compassest my path and* "*my lying down,*" says the royal Psalmist, "*and* "*art acquainted with all my ways.*"—To words, "*There is not a word in my tongue, but lo O* "*Lord thou knowest it altogether;*" to thoughts, "*Search me O God, and know my heart; try me*

" *and know my thoughts; and see if there be any* " *wicked way in me.*" Psm. cxxxix. 3, 4. 23, 24,

Hence if the person spoken of in Heb. iv. 12. be the Lord Jesus, and if the Lord Jesus be very God, then infinite knowledge, is a prerogative we ought to ascribe to Jesus Christ. To consider this more fully, the person here spoken of is stiled the Word of God, " *The Word of God, &c. is a dis-* " *cerner of the thought and intent of the heart.*" Heb. iv. 12.

If we consult the pages of sacred writ, we shall find the Word of God soon represented as conversant with the affairs of men; yea so soon that he first came down into the garden of Eden, to tax our first parents with their rebellion and sin. " If it " shall appear (says one) that the Targumists as- " serted such things concerning the Word of the " Lord, as cannot be applied to God the Father, " and as, at the same time, imply real personality " and divine perfection; it must necessarily follow, " that on these occasions at least, they spake of a " person in the divine essence, distinct from the " Father.

" They find the word in the very first appearance " of God after the fall. That expression, *they* " *heard the voice of the Lord God walking in* " *the Garden,* Gen. iii. 8. is rendered, they heard " the *Word.* All the Targums agree in this view " of the passage; and that of Jerusalem begins " the next verse in this manner; And the word of

"the Lord God called unto Adam. Another ex-
"presses the meaning of the verse still more co-
"piously; they heard the voice of the Lord God,
"walking. It seems most natural indeed, to un-
"derstand this language of a person. For even
"the modern Jews cannot deny, that the parti-
"ciple *walking*, immediately refers to *the voice*,
"and not to the Lord God. *Walking* is un-
"doubtedly the attribute of a person, and not of a
"mere *voice*. The author of *Izeror Hammor*
"makes this observation on the place; before they
"sinned, they saw the glory of the blessed God
"speaking with *him*, that is with God; but after
"their sin, they only heard the voice walking. This
"writer undoubtedly understood the *voice* as a dis-
"tinct person, the same whom he before calls the
"*glory*. And the latter is one of the personal
"characters of the Messiah." Isaiah xl. 5. lx. 1.
Jamieson against Priestley, vol. I. page 53, 54.

And hence it seems that the Word of God, as possessed of personality in the Tri-une Jehovah, is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart; and without enlarging more on so ample a field for discussion, it may be argued from his appearance to and speech to Adam after his fall. A consciousness of guilt caused our first parents to make themselves garments of fig leaves, under the vain pretence of covering their sin and shame; they also hid themselves, but this word or voice, the searcher of hearts, walked in the garden and called them, and his lan-

guage unto Adam was "*Where art thou?*" Awful language indeed, and enough to confound a sinner, when uttered by an heart-searching God. "*And he "said, I heard thy voice in the garden and I was "afraid, because I was naked.—And he said who "told thee thou wast naked, hast thou eaten of the "tree whereof I commanded thee that thou "shouldst not eat?*" Gen. iii. 9, 10, 11. Alas! what could Adam now answer but that he had?

Secondly, In his human nature, the Lord Jesus Christ spake as never man spake.

Though numerous passages of scripture might be called in to vouch for the truth of this assertion, yet for brevity's sake, I at present confine myself to the chapter from which the words are taken, viz. the seventh chapter of St. John's gospel. Our Saviour for fear of the Jews went not up openly to the feast of tabernacles as before, the reason of which we have in his own words, "*My time is not yet come.*" John vii. 6. but still to fulfil the law, he went up though secretly in the midst of the feast, and taught the people, ver. 14, the power of his words seems to have been such, that, "*the Jews marvelled say-"ing, how knoweth this man letters, having never "learned? Jesus answered them and said, my "doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me,*" ver. 15, 16. well then, if he spake as taught of God, might he speak as never man spake! though his discourse pleased some, it as much displeased others; for whilst some "*believed on him and said, when*

" *Christ cometh, will he do more miracles than* " *these which this man hath done?*" ver. 31. others said to him, " *thou hast a devil,*" ver. 20. At last of all the Pharisees, witnessing the murmurs of the people, conspired with the chief priests and sent officers to take him; the substance of his discourse with these is worthy of attention, in which is set forth; 1st. the reality of Christ's human nature, " *Yet a little while am I with you and then I go* " *unto him that sent me,*" ver. 33. and this proof they accepted of his humanity. 2nd. The reality of his divine nature, " *Ye shall seek me and shall not find* " *me, and where I am, thither ye cannot come,*" ver. 34. but this proof of his divinity they endeavoured to controvert, though not without some irresistible persuasion of his Messiahship. " *Then said* " *the Jews whither will he go, that we shall not* " *find him? will he go unto the dispersed among* " *the Gentiles, and teach the Gentiles. What* " *manner of saying is this, ye shall seek me and* " *not find me, and where I am, thither ye cannot* " *come.*" 3d. The fulness of his mediatorial glory, and the graces of the spirit flowing therefrom, to all true believers; " *In the last day, that great day* " *of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If* " *any man thirst let him come unto me and drink.* " *He that believeth on me as the Scripture hath* " *said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living* " *water. But this spake he of the Spirit, which* " *they that believe on him should receive: for the*

"Holy Ghost was not yet given, because that Je-
"sus was not yet glorified," ver. 37, 38, 39. The result of this argument was, *"many said of a truth*
"this is the prophet. Others said this is the
"Christ. But some said, shall Christ come out of
"Galilee?" ver. 40, 41. At last, though *"some of*
"them would have taken him,—no man laid
"hands on him. Then came the officers to the
"chief priests and Pharisees, and they said unto
"them, Why have ye not brought him? the officers
"answered, Never man spake like this man," ver. 44, 45, 46. O most powerful argument to believing hearts, they were sweetly constrained to acknowledge the fulness of wisdom and prudence which dwelt in the Godhead bodily.

Third, in his mediatorial nature, or character of God-man. *"Behold my servant shall deal pru-*
"dently." Isaiah lii. 13.

"By his knowledge shall my righteous servant
"justify many, for he shall bear their iniquities." Isaiah liii. 11.

In regard to Christ's wisdom and prudence, as resting in his mediatorial nature, I have been led in some way to anticipate it under the last remark.

The prudence of Christ however might still be taken notice of, in the methods which he adopted in his divine wisdom, gradually to unfold the work of redemption through all ages, to his own coming, when the *great mystery of godliness, God manifest in the flesh,* was unravelled by his taking upon himself our

human nature. But as the due setting forth of this would require much time, and as it has been ably handled by the late President Edwards in his History of Redemption, I beg leave to refer my readers to that publication, and will observe under this head, that Christ's mediatorial wisdom was manifested in his justification of his chosen people, by bearing their iniquities, and this in three ways;

First, by justifying them in his blood.

Second, by justifying them through his righteousness.

Third, by justifying them by his Spirit.

First, In his Blood. It was a point in the law that "*without shedding of blood is no remission*;" Heb. ix. 22. for it is declared that "*it is the blood which maketh an atonement*," Levit. xvii. 11. It is the gospel which takes up the subject in an effectual manner, for the salvation of sinners; it re-echoes the thunders of the law, that man may know his guilt and danger, but it reverberates not the curses of the law, that man may not fall the victim. It re-echoes the thunders of the law, "*Without shedding of blood, there is no remission*," Heb. ix. 22. It speaks also the inefficacy of man's atonement to take away sin; "*It is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sins*," Heb. x. 4. But it shews the willingness of Christ and the efficacy of his atonement above all others to take them away: for even "*every priest standeth daily ministering and of-*

"fering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can "never take away sins; but this man after he had "offered one sacrifice for sins, for ever sat down on "the right hand of God—for by one offering he "hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified," Heb. xi. 12. 14. But it reverberates not the curses of the law; on the contrary, *"There is therefore "now no condemnation to them which are in "Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh but "after the Spirit,"* Rom. viii. 1. for adds the same apostle in another place, *"Yea are not come unto "the mount that might be touched, and that "burned with fire, nor unto blackness, and "darkness, and tempest, and the sound of a "trumpet, and the voice of words, which voice "they that heard, entreated that the word should "not be spoken to them any more. And so terri- "ble was the sight that Moses said, I exceedingly "fear and quake: but ye are come unto Mount "Zion. And to Jesus the Mediator of the new "covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, which "speaketh better things than that of Abel,"* Heb. xii. 16 to 24.

But if the gospel is intended to convince us of the inefficacy of man's atonement to put away sin, it points us to that great justifying medium Jesus Christ, who bore our sins in his body on the tree. And here whilst it is declared, that *"God com- "mended his love towards us in that whilst we "were yet sinners, Christ died for us."* It is

added, "*Much more then being now justified by* "*his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through* "*him,*" Rom. v. 8, 9. The dying legacy of Christ to his believing people in all ages, was his own blood; which in his last earthly passover he gave for his disciples; "*And he took the cup, and gave* "*thanks, and gave it them, saying; Drink ye all* "*of it, for this is my blood of the New Testa-* "*ment, which is shed for many for the remission* "*of sins.*" And as an encouragement to his disciples, to look for a further supply of this inestimable blessing; Christ adds, "*But I say unto you.* "*I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the* "*vine, until that day when I drink it new with* "*you in my Father's kingdom.*" Matt. xxvi. 28, 29.

Secondly, through his righteousness.

The purification by the blood of Christ, may be considered as the commencing cause of man's acceptance with God, when first wrought upon by the regenerating influence of the Holy Spirit. It precedes justification by Christ's righteousness, seeing a man must be purged from his old sins, before he can bring forth any thing new. And as the blood of Christ cleanseth from unbelief in principle, as well as actual transgression, so it supposes that faith begins in the heart, as well as other divinely implanted graces, when the regenerating influence of the Holy Spirit first operates upon it. And in this operation the blood of Christ is repre-

sented as something worthy of our utmost love. Thus Jesus spake to Paul at his conversion, "*I am* "*Jesus whom thou persecutest;*" and Paul was led from a principle of faith to cry out, "*Lord, what* "*wilt thou have me to do?*" Acts ix. 5, 6. But in a further progress as well as in the commencement, we must be justified through Christ's righteousness, and that by a further extension of the same principle of faith by which in our first conversion we were justified by his blood; and to this conclusion we may be led also by the words of the apostle Paul; "*For I am not ashamed of the gospel of* "*Christ—for therein is the righteousness of God* "*revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, The* "*just shall live by faith,*" Rom. i. 16, 17. and it is further declared that "*they which receive abund-* "*ance of grace, and of the gift of righteousness,* "*shall reign in life by one Jesus Christ,*" Rom. v. 17. And how pathetically does the apostle Paul lament the blindness of many of his brethren in the flesh, "*But Israel, which followed after the law of* "*righteousness, hath not attained to the law of* "*righteousness. Wherefore? because they sought it* "*not by faith, but as it were, by the work of the* "*law: for they stumbled at that stumbling stone.*" Rom. ix. 31, 32. Again, "*Brethren, my heart's* "*desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they* "*might be saved. For I bear them record that* "*they have a zeal of God, but not according to* "*knowledge. For they being ignorant of God's*

"*righteousness, and going about to establish their*
"*own righteousness, have not submitted themselves*
"*unto the righteousness of God: for Christ is the*
"*end of the law for righteousness to every one that*
"*believeth,*" Rom. x. 1 to 4.

If it be asked how this righteousness of the Lord Jesus can justify and comfort any believer, it may be answered, as he is led of the Spirit to receive it as covering his sins, and to appropriate it to himself as the means of his acceptance with God; just as Abraham, "*received the sign of circumcision,*
"*a seal of the righteousness of the faith, which he*
"*had yet being uncircumcised—for the promise that*
"*he should be heir of the world was not to Abra-*
"*ham, or to his seed, through the law, but through*
"*the righteousness of faith.*" Rom. iv. 11, 13.

Thirdly, by his Spirit.

As the righteousness of Christ, procures us a meritorious acceptance, so doth his Spirit, work in us an efficient acceptance before God; and thus we may be said to be justified even by works; not by work as of merit, but as being the fruits of that faith which is first wrought and afterwards maintained in us, by the power and operation of the Spirit. On this, resteth our personal holiness. It is called a *free Spirit,* Psalm li. 12. because by renewing and changing our perverted and rebellious will, we are led into the glorious liberty of the sons of God: it is said to be a "*Spirit of holiness,*" Rom. i. 4, as we have thereby spiritual life, and resurrection from the

death of sin to the life of righteousness: and thus we are said to "*have the first fruits of the Spirit,*" Rom. viii. 23. when by receiving the adoption, to wit the redemption of our body, we are freed from the power and dominion of Satan, which we are enabled to prove to our comfort when we become more in love with God and holiness. And furthermore, to prove the necessity of our being justified by the Spirit. Christ submitted to be justified by the Spirit, as set forth by the apostle Paul; "*God* "*was manifest in the flesh, justified by the Spirit.*" 1 Tim. iii. 16. Need we hesitate a moment before we decide on the cause of the justification of the Son of God? If for the iniquities of his people he was stricken, for their cause like the high priests of old, he justified himself that he might be enabled to offer a perfect sacrifice for them: and for a similar reason did he also submit to personal sanctification; "*And for their sakes, I sanctify myself, that they* "*also might be sanctified through the truth,*" John xvii. 19. and thus God by his Spirit sanctifies the elect, or true believers; "*And such were some of* "*you; but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but* "*ye are justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus* "*and by the Spirit of our God.*" 1 Cor. vi. 11.

But to enter into the main purpose of my present subject, which is to shew the importance of these truths which in our dealings with God, Christ has thought good to enforce with that double confirmation, Amen, Amen, I say unto you, or as it is in our

translation, "*Verily, verily, I say unto you:*" and which from this circumstance seem leading and necessary features of our faith, if we would regard the honor of God, and the best interest of our souls.

First, Verily, verily, I say unto you, hereafter ye shall see Heaven open, and the angels of God, ascending and descending upon the Son of Man John i. 51.

Heaven is primarily the abode of God; where (though his glory is displayed through all his handy works), the fulness of glory, and the exceeding brightness of his person, and of his terrible majesty more fully reside. For though the Lord dwells there if any where in more immediate presence, yet the Heaven of Heavens cannot contain him, 1 Kings viii. 27. The Lord of Hosts filleth all immensity with his presence. Unnumbered worlds are visited, and governed by his good Providence; and though we know nothing of his method of governing the same, yet the present idea which we have of his infinite wisdom, should lead us to maintain this truth that they are so ruled, as in securing most his own honor and glory, should secure the greatest share of good to the creatures contained therein.

Further, not only is Heaven the peculiar abode and residence of the Lord God, but angels are his attendants, hearkening to the voice of his word. And if the splendid retinue of an earthly court strikes us with an idea, of the magnificence and power of *the monarch* to whom they belong, what idea can

be too lofty to form of the magnificence of that God of whom it is declared "*the chariots of God are* "*twenty thousand, even thousands of angels?*" Psm. lxviii. 17. Of these angels it may be said they are *spirits*, ministering spirits who stand ready to fulfill his will. Psm. civ. 4. Heb. i. 7.

From the verse under consideration, including the context, it may fairly be deduced, that a positive proof is given of Christ's essential divinity, and of his positive assertion of the same, by claiming to himself the attributes and honors of deity. Nor let it here be forgotten, that this divine person of whom we speak had just before received from the hands of John, the unction of the Holy Ghost; of whom "*John bare record saying, I saw the Spirit de-*"*scending from Heaven like a dove, and it abode* "*upon him,*" and of whom he further said, (not by his knowledge, for he declared twice "*I knew him* "*not,*" as in verses 31 and 33, but by the knowledge of him that sent him to baptise with water), "*Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending,* "*and remaining on him, the same is he which bap-*"*tiseth with the Holy Ghost.*" But to proceed, two of the disciples of John walking with him, declared to one another, "*We have found the Mes-*"*sias, which is, being interpreted, the Christ.*" Again, "*Philip findeth Nathaniel, and saith unto* "*him, We have found him of whom Moses in the* "*law, and the prophets did write, Jesus of Naza-*"*reth, the son of Joseph.*" Nor let it be thought

amiss to ask here of whom it was that these distinguished personages of old did write. And first let us hear the testimony of Moses speaking of Christ, whose day he saw and rejoiced; he says, "*the* "*Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a prophet* "*from the midst of thee, like unto me unto him* "*ye shall hearken,*" Deut. xviii. 15. The similarity between Christ and Moses in a prophetical character, might be traced in a variety of instances. Yet who that rightly considers for a moment can refuse to trace the difference between divine inspiration, as imparted to a man, and divinity itself, though veiled in the inferior dignity of the mediatorial person of the Son of God? and this train of reasoning we may surely follow when adopted by the apostle Paul, who when speaking of the human nature of the Son of God, declares "*this man was* "*counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inas-* "*much as he who builded the house hath more ho-* "*nor than the house,*" Heb. iii. 3, and of this superior personage considered in the passage quoted, as a prophet by Moses, was not Moses in another place, ashamed to entreat the sight of his glory, under the most solemn ascription of divinity to him. "*And Moses said unto the Lord, See thou sayst* "*unto me bring up this people; and thou hast not* "*let me know whom thou wilt send with me. Yet* "*thou hast said I know thee by name, and thou* "*hast also found grace in my sight. And he* "(i. e. the Lord) *said, My presence shall go with*

" *thee, and I will give thee rest.* *And he* (that is " Moses) *said, I beseech thee shew me thy glory,*" Deut. xxxiii. 12. 14. and 18. Briefly noticing this I pass on 2dly, to observe the testimony of the holy prophets:—of whom the prophets did write, and this also was of Jesus of Nazareth the Son of Joseph.

David as quoted by the apostle Paul, David the man after God's own heart, was not ashamed to ascribe to the Lord Jesus, the tokens of essential divinity. " *And thou Lord, in the beginning hast* " *laid the foundation of the earth; and the Hea-* " *vens are the works of thine hands; they shall pe-* " *rish, but thou remainest; and they shall all wax* " *old as doth a garment; and as a vesture shalt* " *thou fold them up, and they shall be changed;* " *but thou art the same, and thy years shall not* " *fail,*" Psm. cii. 24 to 27, with Heb. i. 10 to 13. Holy Job of old also though no prophet, could not forbear to add his testimony, to the just claims of the Lord Jesus to divinity as represented by the personification of wisdom. " *I wisdom dwell with* " *prudence, I love them that love me—I lead in* " *the way of righteousness; I was set up from* " *everlasting—before the mountains were settled,* " *before the hills was I brought forth,*" Prov. viii. Further, the express voice of the prophets, " *But* " *thou Bethlehem Ephrateh, though thou be little* " *among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee* " *shall he come forth unto me, that is to be ruler*

" *in Israel, whose goings forth have been of old,*
" *from everlasting,*" Micah. " *Yet I am the Lord*
" *thy God from the land of Egypt, and thou shall*
" *know no God but me; for there is no Saviour*
" *beside me.*" Hosea xiii. 4. " *Seventy weeks are*
" *determined upon thy people, and upon thy holy*
" *city, to finish the transgression, and to make an*
" *end of sins—and to bring in everlasting righte-*
" *ousness—from the going forth of the command-*
" *ment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the*
" *Messiah the prince shall be seven weeks, and*
" *threescore and two weeks. And after threescore*
" *and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not*
" *for himself.* Daniel ix. 24 to 27. " *I had pity*
" *for my holy name which the house of Israel had*
" *profaned,—therefore say unto the house of Israel,*
" *thus saith the Lord God, I do not this for your*
" *sakes—but for my holy name's sake,—and I will*
" *sanctify my great name,—then will I sprinkle*
" *clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean;*
" *from all your filthiness and from all your idols,*
" *will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I*
" *give you,—and I will put my Spirit within you—*
" *and ye shall be my people and I will be your*
" *God. Not for your sakes do I this saith the*
" *Lord God, be it known unto you.*" Ezek. xxxvi.
21 to 32. " *Behold I will send my messenger and*
" *he shall prepare the way before me; and the Lord*
" *whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple,*
" *even the messenger of the covenant whom ye delight*

" *in. But who may abide in the day of his coming?*
" *But unto you that fear my name, shall the Son*
" *of Righteousness arise with healing in his wings,*"
Mal. iii. 1, 2. iv. 2. And further, still we see all these proofs summed up as it were, and joined together in one great and glorious head: expressly styled by the titles of Jehovah the Lord of Hosts. " *For unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is*
" *given: and the government shall be upon his*
" *shoulders: and his name shall be called Wonder-*
" *ful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting*
" *Father, the prince of Peace.*" Isa. ix. 6.

But to proceed in Christ's claim to essential divinity as asserted by himself. " *Nathaniel said unto*
" *him* (i. e. to Philip) *Can any good thing Come*
" *out of Nazareth? Philip saith unto him, come*
" *and see. Jesus saw Nathaniel coming to him,*
" *and saith of him, Behold an Israelite indeed in*
" *whom is no guile.*" " *Nathaniel,*" as if doubting his divinity, yet surprised at his seeming acquaintance with his character, " *saith unto him,*
" *Whence knowest thou me. Jesus answered and*
" *said unto him, Before that Philip called thee,*
" *when thou wast under the fig-tree I saw thee.*"
And now " *Nathaniel,*" as if convinced of the divinity of Christ, " *answered and saith unto him,*
" *Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the*
" *king of Israel. Jesus answered and said unto*
" *him, Because I said unto thee, I saw thee under*
" *the fig-tree believest thou? thou shalt see greater*

" *things than these; and he said unto him,* (in the " words on which we found this first remark) *Verily,* " *verily, I say unto you, Hereafter ye shall see* " *Heaven open, and the angels of God ascending* " *and descending upon the Son of Man.*"

Second, Verily, verily, I say unto you, before Abraham was I Am. John viii. 58.

Though from this passage, a proof of the pre-existence of Christ before he came to suffer for us, might be argued, yet as this has just been spoken of under the foregoing head, under the personification of wisdom; the present head, will be appropriated to some little proof of the proper application of the divine title *I Am* to Christ.

And here it may be noted, 1st. That *I Am;* is the title of the great and incomprehensible God.

When Moses was sent unto Pharaoh, that he might bring forth the people out of the land of Egypt, " *Moses said unto God, Behold, when I* " *come unto the children of Israel, and shall say* " *unto them, the God of your fathers hath sent* " *me unto you; and they shall say to me, What is* " *his name? What shall I say unto them? And* " *God said unto Moses, I Am that I Am; and he* " *said thus shalt thou say unto the children of Is-* " *rael, I Am, hath sent me unto you.*" And then as if Jehovah determined still more to apply this glorious title to himself, " *God said moreover unto* " *Moses; Thus shalt thou say unto the children of* " *Israel, the Lord God of your fathers, the God*

"*of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of* "*Jacob hath sent me unto you; this is my name* "*for ever, and this is my memorial to all genera-* "*tions,*" Exod. iii. 13 to 15.

But, 2nd, I Am, is the title of the glorious Son of God, in that essential divinity which he claims with the Father and Holy Spirit from all eternity. And this might be gathered from the passage which has led to the present remark, viz. "*Before Abra-* "*ham was I Am.*" But we cannot pass by without a further remark on the passage just quoted from Exodus, whence it may be observed that this glorious I Am was sent of the Father to Moses and the people of Israel. If we consult the structure of the 13th chap. 14 and 15 verses, we may see one person speaking as God, and another spoken of as God. The person speaking seems to be Jehovah Jesus in his character of the sent of the Father, sending Moses to the people of Israel. Moses had considered himself as sent of God when he says, The God of your fathers hath sent me unto you. "*And God,* "(Jehovah Jesus) *said unto Moses, I Am that I* "*Am: thus shalt thou say unto the children of* "*Israel, I Am hath sent me unto you.*" But this person speaking as God, speaks also of another as God, "*And God said unto Moses, Thus shall* "*thou say unto the children of Israel, the Lord* "*God of your fathers, &c. hath sent me unto* "*you.*" Yet though the Lord Jesus thus maintained his essential Divinity in the Old Testament,

to the comfort and belief of his servant Moses, yet this same assertion is denied by the Jews when maintained in the New Testament. For when he declared to them, "*Before Abraham was I Am:* "*they took up stones to cast at him,*" John viii. 58, 59. as it is written in another place, "*for blas-* "*phemy and because that thou being man, makest* "*thyself God,*" John x. 33.

3d. *I Am,* as the divine title of Christ, is a word of confusion to his enemies. At the time when Christ was betrayed by the traitor Judas into the hands of his enemies, they came out against him with various kinds of weapons, as against a malefactor and a thief. Yet we see not in our Lord, any marks of indignation, any looks of anger or ill-will, any impatient language, at the cruel scorn with which he was treated; but with the mildness of conscious innocence, and with the patience of a suffering Saviour, he asked "*Whom seek ye? they* "*answered him, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus saith* "*unto them, I am he,*" or as the original is, in conformity to Christ's glorious title, *I Am.* And mark the wonderful power of God, (Jehovah Jesus) though encompassed with all the weaknesses and infirmities of our flesh. "*As soon then as he had* "*said unto them, I am he* (or I Am) *they went* "*backward and fell to the ground,*" John xviii. 4 to 6. But for the comfort of those who mourn under a sense of sins, it may be observed;

4th. I Am is the sure rock of refuge, without

shelter in whom, we must die in our sins. "*If ye* "*believe not* (said Christ) *that I am he, ye shall* "*die in your sins,*" John viii. 24. If we read this passage as it stands in our translation; "*If ye be-* "*lieve not that I am he,*" the pronoun *he* must evidently refer to some person before spoken of, and spoken of also in a peculiar manner: and in this point of view, as Christ was the subject of prophecy in his character, of a just God and a Savior, it must clearly point to his divine character, as *he* of whom Moses and the prophets in old time both spake and wrote. But if it be read as in the original, "*If* "*ye believe not, that I Am,*" it is still more pointed and must refer to none but a divine character, who had manifested himself to his people of old, as the I Am, the God of their fathers, forgiving iniquity, transgression and sin. The Jews had declared to Christ that none could forgive sins but God only; yet when they saw him in numerous instances, claim the power of forgiving sins, why did they not acknowledge his divine character, instead of looking upon him as a blasphemer, but that unbelief had hardened their hearts and blinded their eyes, that they would not see the truth.

Were we to consult the subjects upon whom the divine Jesus exercised his forgiving love, we should see not only that Christ considered that that forgiveness was calculated, to cheer and comfort, and give peace to the heart, but also that those to whom he spake in such a way of mercy DID feel joy in consequence

of this proof of his love. To instance a few. When they brought unto him a man sick of the palsy, he said to the poor afflicted creature, "*Son, "be of good cheer, thy sins be forgiven thee,*" and he considered it as easy to cure the disease of the soul, as the malady of the body, and in fact both were cured, his sins were forgiven, his pains were healed; and he who came sick and lying on a bed, went away, taking up his bed and departed to his house, Matt. ix. This same instance is recorded by the two other Evangelists, Mark and Luke, with this addition by the latter, that "*he departed to his house "glorifying God,*" Luke v. 25. Mark ii.

Again, *a woman which was a sinner,* came and anointed Christ's feet with ointment, and wiped them with her hair. Our Lord seeing the principle of faith from which the woman did it, said, "*Her sins which are many, are forgiven her; and "they that sat at meat with him began to say "within themselves, Who is this that forgiveth sins "also?* But the great I Am, by his own divine right, "*said to the woman, Thy faith hath saved "thee; go in peace,*" Luke vii. 37. 47 to 50.

Perhaps it may be asked by some, Why when Moses asked to see the Lord's glory; was this single expression used to denote it, *I Am that I Am?* Let the language of the great Jehovah Jesus in another place answer it to their full satisfaction. "*Thou canst not see my* FACE; *for there shall no "man see me, and live,*" Exod. xxxiii. 20. And

why? Because the beams of Immanuel's fulness are too strong for the sight of mortals. But let us not hence suppose, that nothing of the glory of the great *I Am* is revealed to the sight of his people. If so, what would there be in him, which could gratify the sight of the faithful, and encourage their contemplation by fixing it on the illustrious head of the church? Throughout the Word of God, the beams of the glory of the great *I Am*, are scattered ray by ray to cheer his people. Here is justice; there is mercy; here is truth; there is righteousness; here is judgment; there is love: and these it is the duty of every christian, by the hand of faith to gather, and by the eye of faith to contemplate, through the medium of Christ's human nature, as the glorious Sun of Righteousness arising with healing on his wings.

Third. Verily, verily, I say unto you, the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live. John v. 25.

Here we have Jesus represented in his divine character as judge of the whole earth; here he takes to him his great power, and prevails. The passage before us may be taken in two senses; 1st. As it relates to individual characters, and 2d. To all in the general judgment.

And, 1st. as it relates to individual characters in all ages. The coming of the Lord Jesus to die for all, doth prove that in his sight, as well as in the

Father's, they were considered dead in trespasses and sins; else what need of a Savior to seek and to save them which are lost. In regard to individuals, the death here mentioned can only mean that spiritual death, in which though they are naturally deaf as an adder to the voice of God, yet the Lord Jesus can give them an ear to hear, and an heart to understand. In the character of judge, we see the Lord Jesus recognized very early in the patriarchal ages. The Lord (Jehovah-Jesus) came down to Abraham in the form of an angel, and declared his purpose of destroying Sodom and Gomorrah, for their great sins. *Abraham*, anxious that the cities might (if consistent with the honour of God) be saved, "*Drew near and said, Wilt thou also* "*destroy the righteous with the wicked? Perad-* "*venture there be fifty righteous within the city;* "*wilt thou also destroy, and not spare the place* "*for the fifty righteous that are therein; that be* "*far from thee to do after this manner, to de-* "*stroy the righteous with the wicked; and that* "*the righteous should be as the wicked that be far* "*from thee. Shall not the Judge of all the earth* "*do right?*" Gen. xviii. 23 to 25. And not only is Jehovah-Jesus a judge in coming down to punish signally in this world, those who are desperately wicked; but also for the deliverance of his people. Thus in Israel he raised up judges to avenge the cause of his people, of whom again he considered himself the judge; "*And when the Lord raised*

" them up judges, then the Lord was with the " judge, and delivered them out of the hand of " their enemies, all the days of the judge," Judges ii. 18. Should it be asked why need the Lord be judge, since he had delegated that office to judges of his own appointment; it may be answered because; that though the Lord could put wisdom into the hearts of his judges, yet could not even their wisdom deliver them out of the hands of their enemies, who were often as wise and more subtle than they; for this deliverance, his own Almighty power must be exerted, which could alone free them from the power and wicked designs of their fierce and haughty foes. Nor is it a vain thing for any one to trust his cause in the hands of such a just and righteous judge. Thus when Jephthah was judge over Israel, the king of Ammon came to fight against them, and to recover possessions which he asserted the Israelites had wrested out of his father's hands. Jephthah, conscious that Israel did not unjustly possess those lands, answered, *" The Lord " God of Israel delivered Sihon and all his peo- " ple into the hands of Israel, and they smote " them. So now the Lord God of Israel hath " dispossessed the Amorites from before his people " Israel, and shouldst thou possess it? Wherefore " I have not sinned against thee; but thou dost " me wrong to war against me: the Lord the " Judge, be judge this day between the children of " Israel and the children of Ammon."* And what

was the event of this faithful appeal to his righteous Lord? Did he obtain the wished for succour? Yes, for "*then the Spirit of the Lord came up-*
"*on Jephthah, and he passed over Gilead and*
"*Manasseh, and he passed over Mizpeh of Gi-*
"*lead, and from Mizpeh of Gilead he passed over*
"*unto the children of Ammon—and the Lord de-*
"*livered them into his hands,*" Judges xi. 21 to 32. Holy Job, also, could commit his cause to this judge. And though he was determind to hold fast his integrity, and maintain his uprightness, yet he declares; "*Though I were righteous, yet would I*
"*not answer, but I would make supplication to*
"*my Judge,*" ix. 15. and to this judge he considered himself also accountable, for the use and improvement he should make of the talents and mercies heaped upon him; for says he "*If I have*
"*made gold my hope, and have said to the fine*
"*gold, Thou art my confidence, &c. this also were*
"*an iniquity to be punished by the Judge; for I*
"*should have denied the God that is above,*" Job xxxi. 28. David also speaking of the great majesty of Christ's kingdom, says, "*The Heavens*
"*shall declare his righteousness, for God is judge*
"*himself,*" Psm. l. 6. and in regard to the nature of Christ's judgment he hath declared, "*as I hear*
"*I judge, and my judgment is just,*" John v. 30. But not only hath Christ a divine right to judge individuals, societies, or kingdoms, but finally to judge all the world. And here he is said to judge

the dead, as considering that all must taste death; and in other places the quick and dead, as including perhaps those whom we have reason to suppose will be left alive upon the face of the earth, at the consummation of all things; or as considering the different characters of those who are quickened and renewed by the Spirit of God, and of those who are yet dead in trespasses and sins. In a spiritual sense, the scope of the passage leads us at present to regard it more especially, when we consider the words with which the declaration is prefaced, "*the "hour is coming and now is*;" though we must still maintain its ultimate design, as referring to the day of judgment, which might abundantly be proved from the 29th verse of the 5th chapter, and in the first place of the two, it seems as was just said to refer to the then present appearance of Christ on the earth, and *that* in his power to renew the spiritually dead, which may be gathered from the words, "*The hour is coming, and now "is; for as the Father hath life in himself* (as "supreme God) *so hath he given to the Son (as "God-man)*, the Mediator between God and "man, *to have life in himself. And hath given "him authority to execute judgment, because he "is the Son of man.*" Thus far for the mediatorial and human characters which Christ sustained. But he hath a further judgment in his own divine right, which extendeth over every moral agent because of that reason which he hath given to them.

This too is a subject of human wonder, it is an unfathomable mystery to the natural man: how that the despised Jesus and the crucified Saviour should be the Lord of life and glory, yea even God over all, blessed for ever. And so our divine Saviour knew it would. Hence his language, "*Marvel* "*not at this, for the hour is coming, in the which* "*all that are in the graves shall hear his voice,* "*and shall come forth: they that have done* "*good, unto the resurrection of life; and they* "*that have done evil unto the resurrection of* "*damnation,*" ver. 29. This last quoted verse whilst it tends to shew more clearly still, the divine right of Jesus to judge all mankind, may also serve to illustrate the saying in verse 25, "*they that hear* "*shall live;*" it is the good alone who hear to purpose, who are affected with the divine sound of Christ's gospel, and will at last hear with gladness the awful sound which calls all men to the bar of Jesus, to be judged for the deeds done in the body. But if they that hear shall live, what shall become of those who having slighted the sound of the gospel here, shall shrink with horror at "*the voice of* "*the archangel, and the trump of God,*" calling to a general judgment? Where then is boasted annihilation; the refuge only for despairing souls. These may try their refuge, but it must fail: yea they will surely try it but it will surely fail. All who despised and trampled on the blood of Jesus, all who have done despight to the Spirit of his

grace, all who have rejected his righteousness and laughed at his repeated summons; will say, "*to* "*the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us* "*from the face of him that sitteth on the throne,* "*and from the wrath of the Lamb: for the great* "*day of his wrath is come, and who is able to* "*stand?*" Rev. vi. 17. "*And who* (indeed) *may* "*abide the day of his coming? for he is like a re-* "*finer's fire and like fuller's sope,*" Mal. iii. 2, 3. he will take away all the dross and all the tin, and none but the pure gold shall be spared before him; he will gather the tares and the chaff, and cast them into unquenchable fire, and none but the wheat shall be gathered into his garner.

4th. Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do; for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise. John v. 19.

If Christ's claim to divinity be well founded, he must possess every essential qualification, in an equal degree with the Father: for the notion of inferiority in the persons of the Godhead is absurd; seeing that it cannot admit of an inferiority, where all is unmeasurably perfect, as being infinitely holy just and good. If we take for instance the attribute of power, we consider the Father as possessed of all power, and we style him emphatically God; and his infinite power is one reason why we call him by the name of God. But can we consider the Son as possessed of only one part of the Father's power,

or as it may be called of a finite power, and yet call him God; at least we cannot consider his power as a reason for calling him so, seeing we should deny him the fulness of that attribute, which we consider requisite to essential Divinity. Hence we must either abandon the notion of the Son possessing a finite power, or we must give up the idea of his being essentially God. To consider this a little more fully by the grand criterion, the gospel of truth. We have spoken of the power which Christ had to forgive sins, and of the declarations by which the Jews unwarily and undesignedly, proved the divinity of their rejected Saviour, "*No man can forgive sins* "*but God only.*" But more particularly should we regard his own words not long before his ascension to glory, "*And Jesus came and spake unto* "*them, saying, All power is given unto me in* "*Heaven and in earth; go ye therefore and teach* "*all nations, baptising in the name of the Father,* "*and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost,*" Matt. xxviii. 18. If we take also the attribute of wisdom; which even heathen nations have considered as a perfection worthy to be ascribed to *their* pretended gods; else why the famous oracles which they regarded as infallible, in truly prognosticating future events? But the scriptures of truth teach us to ascribe unerring wisdom to God, and what can be more sublime or more beautiful than the sudden apostrophe of the apostle Paul, when contemplating the riches of sovereign grace; "*O the depth*

" *of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge* " *of God; how unsearchable are his judgments,* " *and his ways past finding out! For who hath* " *known the mind of the Lord, or who hath been* " *his counsellor?*" Rom. xi. 33, 34. But Christ possesseth also in the fullest measure this essential attribute of the true God: for first his name is wisdom. " *Christ—the wisdom of God,*" 1 Cor. i. 24. further he made all worlds; " *The Lord by* " WISDOM *hath founded the earth, by under-* " *standing hath he established the Heavens,*" Prov. iii. 19. and he is spoken of as him, " *who of God* " *is made unto us,* (even in his mediatorial fulness, how much more then in his divine fulness?) *wisdom* " *and righteousness, and sanctification, and re-* " *demption,*" 1 Cor. i. 30. And again, in his grace. Grace cometh from the Father; " *To all that be* " *in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints:* " *Grace to you, and peace from God our Father,* " *and the Lord Jesus Christ,*" Rom. i. 7. and if grace be considered as flowing from the Father, it comes only as a gift to us through Jesus Christ, and thus St. Paul spoke of it as received by the Corinthians, " *The grace of God given you by Jesus Christ,*" 1 Cor. i. 4. But the same apostle speaks of it as the essential prerogative of the Son, and as essential to a christian, as the love of the Father and the fellowship of the Spirit; " *The Grace of the Lord* " *Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the* " *communion of the Holy Ghost be with you all.*

"*Amen,*" 2 Cor. xiii. 14. from these instances it follows that Christ the Son doth possess equally with the Father, the essential proofs of divinity, in wisdom, power and grace, and this might be said also of all the attributes of the Godhead were they mentioned one by one. But the scope and extent of the passage before us remains yet to be considered, as relating to Christ's mediatorial character in the work of redemption for us: "*Verily, verily,* "*I say unto you, the Son can do nothing of him-* "*self, but what he seeth the Father do.*" Here infidels have dared to exult, as considering this language of our Saviour, as a flat denial of his essential Divinity. But let it be recollected, 1st. That though every person of the Godhead be independent, yet not so as to act without the consent, concurrence or assistance of the others, and in this sense the Son doeth nothing of himself but what he seeth the Father do: 2d. Christ in that human nature which he voluntarily took upon himself, became inferior to the Father not as touching his divinity, but as regards his office as sent of the Father to save man, as is clearly set forth in the Athanasian Creed. "Equal to the Father as touching "his Godhead, but inferior to the Father as to his "manhood." Hence he doeth nothing but what he seeth the Father do; that is nothing in the affair of redemption but what is sealed by the approbation of the Father: and in this sense, "*Though* "*he were a Son,* (and as such, inheritor of all his

" Father's glory, yet as doing the will of the Fa-
" ther), *learned he obedience, by the things which*
" *he suffered. And being made perfect, he became*
" *the author of eternal salvation to all them that*
" *obey him.*" Heb. v. 8, 9. But if infidels rejoice in the consideration of the first part of the verse, according to their own perverted interpretation; can they so easily evade the force of the last clause; " *What things soever he* (the Father) *doeth; these* " *also doeth the Son likewise.*" If we consult the context, we find that Christ had just been maintaining the unity of operation between himself and the Father, " *My Father worketh hitherto, and* " *I work,*" and this the Jews considered as an assertion of equality with the Father; and " *there-*
" *fore the Jews sought the more to kill him, be-*
" *cause he not only had broken the sabbath, but*
" *said also that God was his father, making him-*
" *self equal with God.*" The verse in question proves that Christ far from evading or excusing himself from this interpretation of his words, strongly asserted the notion they entertained of his character. " *Verily, verily, I say unto you, whatso-*
" *ever things he doeth, these doeth also the Son*
" *likewise.*" We might observe by the way, that this conduct of Christ's serves much to strengthen the proof of his divine mission. Impostors, however strongly they assert the possession of extraordinary talents, are so guided by the love of this world, that they will not maintain them when they

are incompatible to their interest, or are likely to expose them to the loss of life. But here we see, that whilst the Jews were seeking every opportunity of taking away the life of Christ, he boldly maintains his obnoxious sentiment, and insists upon his proper and essential divinity, though it brought all their rage and malice against him. Much might be said on the latter clause of the verse, to shew in what this divine co-operation of the Father and Son consisted; but as it extends through all the dealings both of providence and grace, it is impossible here to say any thing, but to acknowledge its truth. However the structure of the clause, claims a little attention from us; "*These also doeth* "*the Son likewise.*" First, He doeth them; independently only of God, as rests in the virtual execution, which in the affairs of grace at least is entirely committed to the Son; and dependently in regard to the oneness of design, and unity of operation, in which the Father works also, not actually but by committing all the affairs of redemption to the Son. Just as in the act of death for our sins; neither the Father nor the whole Trinity suffered, but the Son, to reconcile man to the undivided and justly offended God. 2d. *These*; the works spoken of, which are whatsoever the Father doeth, both in Providence and Grace, as was hinted before; 3d. *These also doeth the Son* as a matter of course, as his being the eternal Son of God; 4th. *Doeth the Son likewise,* or in the same manner. Doth the Fa-

ther execute the plans of his councils by his Almighty power; so doth the Son by his: a harmony and oneness of design as well as unity of operation, call upon us from his own words, to acknowledge his undoubted divinity, and to receive, adore, and love him as God over all, blessed for ever.

5th. Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life. John v. 24.

The divinity of the Son, being clearly established from the voice of scripture, all subsequent acts in Christ whether to reward or punish, are only an exercise of his proper prerogative in that great and glorious character: and in this point of view, two things present themselves in the verse before us worthy of our regard, viz.

1st. The hearing of Christ's Word.
2d. The belief on the Father who sent him.

1st. The hearing of Christ's Word. The word of Christ is his gospel, it was ushered into the world like its divine master, with this harmonious and solemn, yet joyful strain, "*Glory to God in the "highest, and on earth peace, good will toward "men,*" Luke ii. 14. And surely this was a solemn strain, if we consider that all the glory of God, in this fallen and unredeemed state of man, was at enmity against him; yet it was a glorious strain, if

notwithstanding, God for his mercy's sake, and for his dear Son's sake had engaged (on the performance of certain stipulated articles to be performed in the person of a surety), to pass by the sin of those whom his Spirit should in his own due time bring to repentance and the acknowledging of the truth, and to cause peace on earth and good will toward man to be proclaimed; moreover it was an harmonious strain: if the safety of man could be fully and finally ensured, notwithstanding his lost condition, and even the glory of God be more fully manifested to his creatures thereby: for we are not warranted either by the voice of scripture, or by the displays we have of the fulness of the divine nature, to suppose God's glory is really encreased in the effecting our salvation; for if that were the case, it would have still more been increased, if instead of choosing only a few of the world, by the operation of his Spirit through faith in Jesus Christ, he had been pleased to choose and ordain every descendant of Adam to life, by the same Spirit, through faith in the same Lord; but the declaration of the word of God, and the actual continuance of thousands in open and secret sins, notwithstanding the gospel is daily preached, prove that this was not the method which God had pitched upon for the display of his glory; and even his elect ones increase not his essential glory by their election, but only are made the happy creatures of his grace, to contemplate his glory to their own unspeakable and eternal de-

light, and to display it in its beauty to the sight of others.

That we might rightly know the true meaning of hearing Christ's Word, it will be necessary to pay close attention to the general language of scripture in speaking on the subject, and from thence we may gather, that it is not an outward hearing that can profit the soul, but the attention of the heart, in believing and receiving with gladness the words of Christ. And this alone can profit the soul, for "*unto every one that hath, shall be given, and* "*from him that hath not, even that he hath shall* "*be taken away from him,*" Luke xix. 26. Various readings of this passage may be found in the Evangelists. Luke in another place hath it: "*for who-* "*soever hath, to him shall be given; and whosoever* "*hath not, from him shall be taken even that which* "*he seemeth to have,*" viii. 18. Matthew has it, "*For* "*whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he* "*shall have more abundance: but whosoever hath* "*not, from him shall be taken away, even that he* "*hath,*" xiii. 12. and again in another place to the same purpose, xxv. 29. Mark has it; "*For he* "*that hath, to him shall be given: and he that* "*hath not, from him shall be taken even that* "*which he hath,*" Mark iv. 25. These passages however agree so closely in the leading signification, point out so strongly the danger of unprofitableness, and shew so clearly that barrenness of soul is in

tended, that we may gather this signification from them; *To him that hath* a willingness of mind to receive instruction, *shall be given* spiritual understanding suited to his case and condition, *but from him that hath not* that willingness, *shall be taken away even that which he hath*, even that spiritual understanding which had been given, but which he would not improve. And if we trace the progress or declension of religion in the heart, we shall find that barrenness and infertility follows an unwillingness to exercise the gifts and graces of the Spirit and many it is to be feared, who had begun to distinguish between good and evil, by being vainly puffed up because of it in their yet fleshly mind have become so bewildered in the mazes of reason that at last all their attainments have in judgment been taken from them, and they have gone on without light and knowledge, dead while they yet live and according to the passage in Luke viii. 18 though he may seem to himself to continue in the right use of his spiritual understanding, yet it is only seeming, whilst he is under a dreadful delusion and whilst the Spirit of God is departed from him.

But more particularly the method and spirit of hearing which we should adopt, is set forth by our Saviour in the parable of the sower. "*Behold a sower went forth to sow. And when he sowed some seeds fell by the way side, and the fowls came and devoured them up, some fell into stony*

"places, and some fell among thorns. But others "fell into good ground and brought forth "fruit."

But the people at large in whose outward ears this was spoken understood it not, nor did they express any willingness that they might, and *"there-"fore* (said Christ) *I speak to them in parables, "because they seeing, see not, and hearing they "hear not, neither they do understand."* But did the disciples better understand this discourse? No, and this may be gathered from the language ascribed to our Saviour in this parable by another Evangelist, as spoken to his twelve disciples, *"Know ye "not this parable; and how then will ye know all "parables,"* Mark iv. 13. and also from the further explanation given to the same parable. *"Hear ye "therefore the parable of the sower. When any "one heareth the word of the kingdom, and un-"derstandeth it not, then cometh the wicked one, "and catcheth away that which was sown in the "heart. This is he which received seed by the "way side. But he that received seed into stony "places, the same is he that heareth the word, "and anon with joy receiveth it: Yet hath not "root in himself, but dureth for a while: for "when tribulation or persecution ariseth because "of the Word, by and by he is offended. He "also that receiveth seed among the thorns, is he "that heareth the Word; and the cares of this "world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the*

"*word, and he becometh unfruitful. But he*
"*that receiveth seed into the good ground, is he*
"*that heareth the word, and understandeth it;*
"*which also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth,*
"*some an hundred fold, some sixty, some thirty,*"
Matt. xiv. 3 to 5, and 18 to 23. Alas, we have reason to lament not only our little understanding in divine things, but also our little desire to be acquainted with them. If any one say, that the hearing or attending to Christ's Word is of no importance, we may answer briefly in a few words. 1st. It is a sin to reject it, for we are commanded by a voice from Heaven to give an ear to him. Thus when Christ was transfigured before some of his disciples, which was doubtless intended to give a faint resemblance of his divinity, seeing "*His face*
"*did shine as the sun, and Moses and Elias*
"*talking with him, a bright cloud overshadowed*
"*them; and behold, a voice out of the cloud,*
"*which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I*
"*am well pleased; hear ye him.*" Matt. xvii. 2 to 5. And, 2d. It will be to our eternal shame and confusion of face. "*If ye believe not* (said Christ), *that I am he,* (or as it is in the original,
"that I Am, asserting thereby his essential di-
"vinity), *ye shall die in your sins.*" John viii. 24. But having said thus much on the necessity and importance of hearing and attending to the Son, I pass on to observe the second thing presented to our regard, viz.

2nd. The belief of the Father who sent him.

It was the pathetic lamentation of Christ over an unbelieving world. "*O righteous Father the* "*world hath not known thee,*" John xvii. 25. and to shew the necessity of our knowing and believing in the Father, did Christ begin his comprehensive and inimitable prayer, with these words, "*Our Fa-* "*ther which art in Heaven, hallowed be thy* "*name.*" And indeed the knowledge of the Father is the joy and rejoicing of all true christians; "*and truly* (says St. John) *our fellowship is with the* "*Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ;*" 1 John i. 3. and the love of the world is considered by the same apostle as opposed to the love of the Father, 1 John ii. 15. and even our confession of Jesus Christ is to be, "*to the glory of God the Father,*" Phil. ii. 11.

But more particularly we are to believe on the Father.

1st. Because he is the Creator of man.

"*In the beginning God created the Heavens* "*and the earth,*" Gen. i. 1. "*and God said, Let* "*us make man in our own image, after our like-* "*ness,*" i. 26.

This last is a more particular reason why we believe on the Father. Not merely because we are created, for so every thing is in Heaven, earth and sea; nor merely because God hath given us dominion over every thing on the earth or in the sea, but because he hath made us in his own image.

To the beasts he hath given no endowments of mind, no reason, no speech, no intellect, above all no spirit. When the beasts die they return to their dust and there perish for ever; but when man dies though he returns to his dust, yet his spirit must ascend to God who gave it; and though death in its natural state is the wages of sin, yet it cannot destroy a complete spirit; hence annihilation is the most hellish doctrine which the devil or man ever thought of, to get rid of the fear of the pains of hell for ever; which pains are a spiritual punishment of a spiritual transgression, and as the soul cannot be punished by death like the body, so it can only be punished by a duration of punishment, unlimited as its own existence; and this must be the case, to make a sinner's punishment desperate; for could he see though at the end of millions of years a hope of an end to his pain; he would forget by anticipation much of that pain, above all would forget that that pain was inflicted as a punishment for offences against the goodness and glory of God: and further, the visible things that are made do so clearly shew the invisible things of him even his eternal power and Godhead, that all are left without excuse who refuse to glorify him. Rom. i. 20, 21.

2nd. Because he is the preserver of men, and this in two points of view.

1st. As the preserver of our bodies: and this often, by a variety of unforeseen and seeming improbable steps. What for instance, a more im-

probable way of preserving the whole house of Israel, than sending Joseph a prisoner into Egypt through the baseness of his envious brethren, and that not till many years had rolled between: yet so it was, "*Now therefore* (says Joseph) *be not* "*grieved, nor angry with yourselves that ye sold* "*me hither: for God did send me before you to* "*preserve life,*" Gen. xlv. 5. O miraculous interposition of a preserving God, truly may Jacob rejoice and Israel be glad, for the Lord hath visited his chosen people: thus also "*The Lord* "*preserved David whithersoever he went,*" 2 Sam. viii. 6.

2nd. As the preserver of our spirits. In the first instance God the Father was considered as the preserver of our bodies, in which he watches over them every moment in the dealings of his Providence. But here in the dealings of his grace, we see him more kindly interposing for our good. "*Lord* (says the Psalmist) *preserve me from all* "*evil,*" Psalm cxxi. 17. But not only may our heavenly Father be said to preserve our souls from all evil, by bringing us at first through sovereign grace, from the error, the snares and the condemnation of the wicked, but also preserving us from again giving up our hearts to the ways of ungodliness, and this he does by frequent visitations to the souls of his people. Holy Job whilst he maintained the uprightness of his own heart, and said, "*Thou knowest that I am not wicked,*" yet spoke

it not to glory in his own strength, but for the praise of the Lord; for he adds "*Thou hast* "*granted me life and favor, and thy visitation* "*hath preserved my Spirit,*" Job x. 12. and thus it is with all his saints who are preserved by him for ever. Psalm xxxvii. 28.

But we are to believe on God the Father.

3d. Because he is the benefactor of men.

"*Thou crownest the year with thy goodness:* "*and thy paths drop fatness; they drop upon the* "*pastures of the wilderness, and the little hills* "*rejoice on every side. The pastures are clothed* "*with flocks, the vallies also are covered over with* "*corn,*" Psalm lxv. 11, 12, 13. Indeed the whole Psalm may be considered as a song of gratitude and thankfulness to God for all his benefits.

But to speak more particularly as to the dealings of God's grace. We are to believe on God the Father.

4th. Because he sustains the honor of the offended Godhead.

"*God is jealous, and the Lord revengeth, the* "*Lord revengeth and is furious; the Lord will* "*take vengeance on his adversaries, and he re-* "*serveth wrath for his enemies,*" Nahum i. 2. His name is, "*The Lord, the Lord God, merciful* "*and gracious, long suffering, and abundant in* "*goodness and truth; keeping mercy for thou-* "*sands, forgiving iniquity, and transgression, and* "*sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty,*

"*visiting the iniquity of the fathers, upon the* "*children, and upon the children's children, unto* "*the third and to the fourth generation,*" Exod. xxxiv. 6, 7. It may be asked by some, is vindictive justice an adorable attribute, in an holy God? If by vindictive justice, be meant a justice exercised by a revengeful, capricious, and bloody disposition; I answer it is not. But if by it is meant a supreme regard to God's own honor, leading him to hate sin, as the natural effect of perfect holiness, hating sin as opposed thereto, punishing sin as dishonorable thereto, punishing the sinner, only as it were in self-defence of his adorable attributes, and not from any wish otherwise to shed the blood of his creatures; then I say even the vindictive justice of God is an adorable attribute. This we should believe, and at this we should tremble. But as *the devils also believe and tremble,* James ii. 19. we should do more, and should even love the adorable attribute of God's vindictive justice; and that for this reason, for as it is immutable it is the cause of safety and protection to his friends, as well as of confusion and dismay to his enemies. O my God how terrible art thou; for "*with God is terrible ma-* "*jesty,*" Job xxxvii. 22. "*Thy right hand shall* "*teach thee terrible things,*" Psalm xlv. 4. "*Thou* "*art terrible as an army with banners,*" Cant. vi. 4. Yet "*The Lord is with me as a mighty terrible* "*one,*" Jer. xx. 11. if I trust in him; and in this

character he will destroy his enemies and the enemies of his people from before his face for ever.

But the vindictive justice of the Father, in sustaining the honor of the offended Godhead, will appear more worthy of our adoration, if we consider another motive for our faith upon God the Father, namely,

5th. Because he loved us and gave his Son to die for us.

"*God so loved the world that he gave his only* "*begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him* "*should not perish, but have everlasting life,*" John iii. 16. Why did God give his Son to die for us? Was there a necessity for it? In regard to his own honor certainly not: his vindictive justice guarded his own essential attributes, and even the immediate execution of the threatened sentence, "*In the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt* "*surely die,*" had it been immediately executed, would have made God true though every one a liar. Where then the necessity for it? Could not the sinner be saved without it? By no means. Without shedding of blood there is no remission; if the blood of the sinner was shed, and the blood is the life, then the loss of his life atoned for the transgression; and then how could the sinner be said to be saved. But the blood of Christ alone cleanseth from all sin. Hence in Christ alone the sinner is saved. In Christ, through his meritorious and vi-

carious sacrifice alone, is the vindictive justice of the Father satisfied first and then appeased, and the sinner freed from the pains of hell. Further, the other persons of the Godhead are insulted as well as the Father, though the Father alone sustains the honor of all, and the Son alone offers an atonement well pleasing to all; for God the Son is the Creator of all worlds as well as the Father: the Holy Spirit also, by animating all nature, and by its influence infusing into all breath and being, is the author of all life, and above all the giver unto man of his living soul. Hence how did Jesus sigh in spirit over the sins of man; how he even wept over Jerusalem when with a prophetic eye he contemplated its fall, as the awful consequence which must follow its unbelief and hardness of heart, in crucifying himself the Lord of life and glory: and hereby Christ is rejected, God the Father dishonoured and insulted, the Holy Spirit grieved, and his own offices of grace disowned, disapproved, denied; his efficaciousness, and peculiar and exclusive power to regenerate the soul, and carry on the work of grace therein from first to last, contemned, and the free will (falsely so called) of man, raised to the honor of renewing a fallen and undone spirit, whereas the free will of man, by his contracted powers and above all stubbornness of heart, will only be exerted in running the downward road to perdition, to the contemning of God the Father, rejecting the Son, and doing despite to the Spirit of grace. But a word of com-

fort to those who by this blessed Spirit are taught to believe: he that heareth the words of Christ, and believeth on the Father who sent him, is freed from condemnation, and passed from death unto life. Mark first, how the hearing of Christ's word, and the belief of the Father are joined together. We know nothing of the Father but as we attend to the words of Christ, explaining as far as useful for us his mysterious and incomprehensible nature. We know nothing of Christ but as we believe the testimony of the Father concerning him, which the Holy Spirit hath been pleased to indite, and cause to be written in ink by the hands of the apostles and disciples of our Lord, from thence to be copied and engraven upon the fleshly tables of our hearts by his own most gracious operations, and these being first separately useful, are joined together as the way to escape the pains of hell. Secondly, Thus joined they are for the present comfort of every believer: "*for the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on* "*him, shall not be ashamed.*" And, "*whosoever* "*shall call upon the name of the Lord, shall be* "*saved,*" Rom. x. 11. 13.

6th. Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Moses gave you not that bread from Heaven; but my Father giveth you the true bread from Heaven. For the bread of God is he which cometh down from Heaven, and giveth life unto the world. John vi. 32, 33.

It seems the bread given under the dispensa-

tion of Moses, came from Heaven; for it is declared, "*Man did eat angels food,*" Psalm lxxviii. 25. "which may insinuate either that it was made "and prepared by their ministry; or that angels "themselves if they had need of any food, could not "have any that was more agreeable than manna "was: it being of an heavenly original, and of sin- "gular vigour and efficacy for preserving and nou- "rishing those who used it, according to God's ap- "pointment; or as it is in the margin, every one "did eat the bread of the mighty, that is, even the "common Israelites fed upon as delicate food as "the greatest nobles and princes did." See Cruden's Concordance on Manna.

Yet it was not *that* bread emphatically which came down from Heaven, seeing it could not impart eternal life: the Jews themselves acknowledged the heavenly origin of the bread given in the wilderness. "*Our fathers did eat manna in the desert, as it is* "*written, he gave them bread from Heaven to* "*eat.*" Yet alas, though they ate this manna they are dead: but he that eateth of Christ shall live for ever.

Hence *that* bread is the only spiritual refreshment to the soul.

1st. As it cometh immediately from Heaven, the manna of old was rained from Heaven: so this descendeth from the cloud of God's presence. It droppeth by the powerful operation of the Spirit, not upon the bare earth, but upon the heart of man,

intended for his immediate support. Like the manna which descended every day, and of which every one was to gather according to his eating. Exod. xvi. 18. So this bread from Heaven is intended for the daily refreshment of God's people, for which they were commanded to ask by our Saviour in this language, "Give us this day our daily bread."

2d. As it is the gift of the Father, "*My Father "giveth you the true bread from Heaven,*" hence if Christ was not given of the Father, as the angel of the covenant to redeem his people, he is not the true bread from Heaven. But we have two rules given us by Christ himself, (the spiritual bread) whereby his divine nature may be traced. 1st. The bread of God is he which cometh down from Heaven, and this must prove that his residence was in Heaven; and not merely so, but that he came immediately from the presence of the Father; thus he is said to have laid in the bosom of the Father, from all eternity; yea and more than this, for it proves also that he came forth from his Father's glory which still was not left behind, as if Christ was unworthy to bear it along with him, but came forth with him only shrouded behind the veil of his mortal flesh: thus it was he "*who thought it not "robbery to be equal with God,*"—who "*took "upon himself the form of a servant;*" and this glory it was which Christ before his death, prayed the Father he might possess in his mediatorial fulness without a veil, as well as in his proper and es-

sential divinity. "*And now, O Father, glorify* "*thou me with thine own self, with the glory* "*which I had with thee before the world was,*" John xvii. 5. But, 2d. The divine nature of Christ may be traced not only as being the bread which cometh down from Heaven, and as such being the gift of the Father, but also as giving life to the world. In or through the beginning as one of the names of the divine Jesus, God created the Heavens and the earth. Gen. i. 1. Thus far for creation, but more particularly in redemption. "*He* "*that believeth in me* (says Christ) *though he were* "*dead, yet shall he live,*" John xi. 27. But again, "*In him was life, and the life was the light of* "*men,*" John i. 4. So here, "*I am that bread* "*of life. This is the bread which cometh down* "*from Heaven, that a man may eat thereof and* "*not die,*" John vi. 48, 50.

But that bread is the only spiritual refreshment to the soul.

3d. As it alone can satisfy the cravings of an hungry soul. The soul of a man craves wisdom. The sinful desire of this, caused Adam to yield to the tempter, and made him ask to taste of the tree of knowledge of good and evil: hence we must not only seek wisdom, but seek it in the way of God's appointment. "*Where shall wisdom be found,*" (said one of old) *Man knoweth not the price* "*thereof, neither is it found in the land of the*

"*living. The depth saith, It is not in me; and* "*the sea saith, It is not with me. God under-* "*standeth the way thereof, and he knoweth the* "*place thereof. When he made a decree, and a* "*way for the lightening and the thunder. Then* "*did he see it, and declare it, he prepared it, yea* "*and searched it out. And unto man he said,* "*Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom;* "*and to depart from evil is understanding,*" Job xxviii. 12. 14. 23. 26 to 28. When the soul has begun by the blessed influence of God's Spirit to look heavenward; what is there can refresh it so much as the bread of life that cometh down from Heaven, which is most emphatically meat indeed? What can bear up the soul above convictions, remorse, and trouble of spirit: but him who can say, "*Go thy way, thy sins which are many are forgiven* "*thee,*" or who adds, "*Come unto me, all that are* "*weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest.*" And who without leading us to dream of uncovenanted grace, can shew us the free grace and rich favor of God flowing through his blood as that blood of the covenant, which being itself an holy thing, can make those holy who are by faith led to wash therein. And to what trouble and anxiety is he exposed, who whilst he feels his own sins to be too heavy a burden, has not yet so humbled his heart, as to receive Christ as his only Saviour. Many of God's dear children are long exercised with this

painful conflict to the dishonor of Christ and the anguish of their own souls: from which they are not delivered, till they are experimentally shewn that out of Christ they can do nothing, have no strength and no comfort in the ways of godliness: and when they are savingly taught this, as they must be sooner or later if they are the adopted children of God, then they are led to cry out, "*Lord evermore give "us this bread.*"

Many more reasons might be shewn, to prove that Christ is the only spiritual refreshment to the soul. But these must suffice, adding only the similar passage in the same chapter. Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that believeth on me hath everlasting life.

7th. Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. John vi. 53.

As the flesh of the Son of man, represented also as the bread of life which cometh down from Heaven, can alone satisfy the cravings of the hungry soul, so his blood alone can satisfy the thirst of him who longs to partake of that fountain which is opened for sinners. This lesson Christ taught more fully to the woman of Samaria, "*Jesus said unto "her, If thou knewest the gift of God, and who "it is that said unto thee, Give me to drink, thou "wouldest have asked of him, and he would have "given thee living water. Whosoever drinketh of*

"*the water that I shall give him, shall never* "*thirst: but the water that I shall give him,* "*shall be in him a well of water springing up* "*into everlasting life,*" John iv. 10, 14.

The necessity of receiving Christ in all his ordinances, may well be argued from the scriptures. In the sixth head it was shewn, that the eating of the bread of life was necessary to obtain eternal life, but here the blood of Christ is conjointly and inseparably spoken of as necessary for the same end. And this might be further argued by considering the method in which Christ administered the last supper at the time of the passover, and which has been called the Lord's supper, or sacrament of the supper of the Lord; for "*Jesus took bread, and* "*blessed, and brake it, and gave to them, and said,* "*Take, eat; this is my body. And he took the* "*cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it* "*to them; and they all drank of it. And he said* "*unto them, this is my blood of the New Testa-* "*ment, which is shed for many,*" Mark xiv. 22 to 24. A few things may be observed concerning the Lord's Supper, as first, it is to be received in prayer for a blessing upon it; that by faith it may be received as shewing forth the Lord's death till he come. If it be not viewed in reference to Christ, and to his body being broken for our sins, no ceremony is more unmeaning in the world. Can the eating of a morsel of bread or drinking a drop of wine, be well pleasing in the sight of God? Can

they impart spiritual life and comfort to the believer, and cheer and animate his soul through all the trials, temptations, and conflicts from within and without, with which he is beset in this his day? In themselves considered they cannot, but in reference to Christ by faith, as considering the infinite merit, and extreme importance to us of his atonement, it is of great comfort and encouragement to the soul of every believer. Christ in this also set us an example, by blessing or asking a blessing upon it. By blessing it which is peculiar to himself as head of the church, and therefore not to be imitated by any as thinking to impart that sanctification to the host used, which Christ hath imparted to his own body. By asking a blessing upon it which it is our duty by faith in his name to implore, as knowing that he who sanctified his own body for the sake of his people, will sanctify the bread and wine the emblems of his body and blood, as far as we faithfully and piously do receive the same. 2nd. It is to be received with thankfulness. Thus Christ as an example for us, took the cup and gave thanks. And thus also we, when we partake of that part of the Lord's Supper which is an emblem of the blood of Christ, washing away our sins, are to give thanks unto God that by the shedding of Christ's blood once for all, he hath for ever perfected them that are sanctified, in which number we hope and pray to be, and for which end we sit down to the table of our Lord, to express our faith on his merits,

and to shew unto his followers also that we desire to be of their number. It remains lastly to express the peculiar privileges of those who thus spiritually drink the blood of Christ. If those who drink not of this, have no life, those it may be presumed who do drink it shall live for ever, and in fact this is the sum and conclusion of the whole; "*Whoso eateth "my flesh and drinketh my blood, hath eternal "life, and I will raise him up at the last day,*" vi. 54. Though all mankind indiscriminately will be raised up from the dead at the day of judgment, yet the faithful alone will be raised up in a peculiar and happy sense of the word. St. Paul affirms, as if for the consolation of believers, "*The dead in "Christ shall rise first,*" 1 Thess. iv. 16. and whatever might be the precise meaning which St. Paul meant to convey in his words, and which we cannot divine exactly after the lapse of so many hundred years; yet we may affirm some honorable distinction, to be conferred on God's people alone was intended. Something of this sort is also set forth in the Book of Revelations: "*I saw the souls of them "that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and "for the word of God, and which had not wor- "shipped the beast, neither his image, neither had "received his mark upon their foreheads or in "their hands: and they lived and reigned with "Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the "dead lived not again, until the thousand years "were finished. This is the first resurrection.*

"*Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the "first resurrection,*" Rev. xx. 4, 5 and 6. But without arguing any thing as to the previous time of the resurrection of saints, before that of the wicked being summoned to appear to receive a final condemnation, it appears at the last day that the righteous will peculiarly be raised to spiritual life with those enjoyments which are alone to be found in the immediate presence of God.

8th. Jesus answered them and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Ye seek me not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves and were filled. Labor not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of Man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed. John vi. 26, 27.

So dreadfully depraved is the human mind, and so ready to pervert the noblest institutions and the best blessings, that we need often to be reminded of the spirituality of those appointments, which are settled in the decrees of Heaven: and often more especially so in the grand affair of salvation, where man is ever ready to mix his own works, with the meritorious offices of the Son of God. Honest zeal and depraved appetite have alike erred in this, though by the grace of God not to equal lengths nor consequently to equal danger. The honest zeal of Peter led him to abuse one of the sacraments of Christ's appointment. "*And supper being ended,*—Jesus

" riseth from supper, and laid aside his garment, " and took a towel and girded himself. After that " he poureth water into a bason, and began to wash " his disciples feet, and to wipe them with the towel " wherewith he was girded? Then cometh he to " Simon Peter: and Peter saith unto him, Lord " dost thou wash my feet. Jesus answered and " said unto him, What I do thou knowest not now: " but thou shalt know hereafter. Peter (with " more zeal than faith) *saith unto him, Thou shalt " never wash my feet. Jesus answered him, If I " wash thee not, thou hast no part with me."* Peter felt the rebuke, but not fully seeing the spirituality of the Lord's appointment, with unabated zeal exclaimed, *" Lord, not my feet only, but also my " hands and my head."* But as Peter was right in the main, though his well meant zeal had too little either of faith or wisdom; our Lord condescends to shew him the nature of this institution. *" Jesus " saith to him, He that is washed, needeth not, " save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit;"* and then to shew that some who received the ordinance would not be cleansed thereby, seeing they saw not its spiritual nature; he adds, *" and ye are " clean, but not all."* The depraved appetites of the Corinthians led them also to abuse in a more gross and fatal way the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, for which they were severely reprimanded by the apostle Paul, *" For first of all, when ye " come together in the church, I hear that there be*

"*divisions among you, and I partly believe it.*
"*For there must be also heresies among you, that*
"*they which are approved may be made manifest*
"*among you. When ye come therefore together*
"*into one place, this is not to eat the Lord's Sup-*
"*per. For in eating, every one taketh before other*
"*his own supper; and one is hungry, and another*
"*is drunken. What? have ye not houses to drink*
"*in? or despise ye the church of God, and shame*
"*them that have not? What shall I say to you?*
"*Shall I praise you in this? I praise you not.—*
"*For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily,*
"*eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not*
"*discerning the Lord's body,*" 1 Cor. xi. 18 to 22 and 29. and these Corinthians it appears had so grossly perverted the intent of the Lord's Supper, that they had made it a scene of intemperance instead of honor to Christ the living head of his church.

Having spoken thus far on the awful nature and consequence of abusing this sacrament, I would digress for a few minutes to observe the rules laid down by the apostle Paul, which may be observed in two heads; 1st, As to their spirituality, and 2d. As to the order. First, what may be said in regard to their spirituality can only be considered as a repetition of the substance of our Saviour's language on the same head: "*For* (says Paul) *I have received*
"*of the Lord that which also I have delivered unto*
"*you, that the Lord Jesus, the same night in which*

" he was betrayed, took bread: and when he had " given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat, " this is my body, which is broken for you: this " do in remembrance of me. After the same man- " ner also he took the cup when he had supped, " saying, This cup is the New Testament in my " blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in re- " membrance of me. For as oft as ye eat this " bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew forth the " Lord's death till he come." 2d. As to the order in which it may be noted, first, that it be not done without serious self-examination of those who receive it, and that for this reason, that we may not eat or drink unworthily: further, this self-examination may consist in two things, viz. A searching of our own hearts, that by probing to the bottom of the evils therein, we may not dare to come with any presumption of, or trust upon any supposed merit or righteousness in us, as making us worthy to partake of; and as a part of this head, it may be considered that no evils observed in us though we set them before our eyes in the greatest enormity, and bewail them with the greatest loathing and humility, should lead us to abstain from coming to the Lord's table on account of such perceptible unworthiness; for let it be recollected, that our sense of unworthiness is a proof of itself that we are not left of God to hardness of heart, but rather that by considering we are chosen of God, (and we are chosen to repentance as well as to eternal life), we

may with an humble yet earnest faith lay hold of him in his sacraments, who is the strength and sanctifier of his chosen people: and further, 2d. This examination may consist in searching our hearts, that we may know whether after having thus humbly presumed to come, we come in the Lord's appointed way, "*And so* (says the apostle, in the way "laid down) *let him eat of that bread, and drink* "*of that cup,*" and this way is, 1st. in faith; *Take, eat, this is my body.* Not my body actually, as possessing blood and flesh and bones, but my body, as giving support, and as being the emblem thereof, as setting forth the Lord's death till he come, and so putting you in constant mind of that human body of Christ which was broken for you on the cross, to the efficacy of which you look through the appointed and visible emblem. 2nd. In love, *This do in remembrance of me:* in remembrance of the agony it cost me when I hung so many hours on the accursed tree, which conjoined with my sufferings in the garden, and every other suffering I endured in my nature, were intended to appease the anger of God, and ward off the stroke of his justice from all his elect people: and this, is it not a motive of love in God's people. Look at the sufferings of Christ: "*He was wounded for our transgressions.*" Look at his cross: "*the chastisement of our peace was* "*upon him,*" Isaiah liii. 5. Look at the efficacy of that accursed death which he suffered, when for-

saken of God, and made the scorn and reproach of men: when he was *blotting out the hand writing of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way nailing it to his cross. And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them.* Coloss. ii. 14, 15. And when did he do this? When he was in favor with God and man? No. But when he was forsaken of God, even so, that he cried out in the anguish of his soul, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me:* and when he was mocked by men, who offered if he would come down from the cross, to believe. Yes, when he was forsaken by God and rejected by men, even of thee, oh my soul, then by his divine power, and from his own ineffable love, towards those whom the Father had given unto him; he unobserved by men, was silently and irresistibly carrying on and finishing the work of redemption, and removing the imputation of the penal statutes contained in the law of ordinances from us, by bearing them himself and nailing them to his cross, also by destroying the power of satan and all his host, so that now even that arch apostate knows by woful experience that God has taken his own cause into his own hands, to the comfort of his friends and the destruction of his enemies: and this is a cause for our love.

3d. In thankfulness.

There is a cheerfulness in obeying the commands

of any one whom we consider our rightful Lord. And such is Christ in three particulars, *viz.* 1st. In creation, 2d. In preservation, which two are in providence, 3d. In redemption, which is in grace. But this union is more heightened when the connexion is more close. Thus if Christ is the husband, and the church is the Lamb's wife, every blessing which he as a divine friend can bestow, he as a loving husband is willing to give: and here he cries to her whom he has betrothed to himself for ever, and as speaking to every individual of that church whom he has espoused, "*Eat, O friends,* "*drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved,*" Sol. Songs v. 1. And amidst her very backwardness to open her heart at times to her beloved, yet her language is this, "*I charge ye, O ye daughters of Je-*"*rusalem, if ye find my beloved, that ye tell him,* "*that I am sick of love,*" ver. 8.

But in speaking of the order we may note further,

2dly. That it be not done, without a visible as well as inward union of its communicants: and here this union may be considered as internal or spiritual, and 2d. as visible: in the 1st. as being an union of heart, and 2d. in regard to time and place.

1st. As being an union of heart. "*A new com-*"*mandment* (said Christ) *I give unto you, that ye* "*love one another; as I have loved you, that ye* "*also love one another.* The method of the narrative as contained throughout the 13th chap. of John,

gives us the strongest reason to believe, that all the disciples were present at this discourse: and though Christ had declared that one of them should betray him, yet as that one behaved himself most probably as well outwardly as the rest of the disciples, and as they were unacquainted with the nature of that denial, dereliction, and betraying of Christ, which that one would soon manifest, so most probably he was for the present to be included in their love: and this was abundantly to be manifested at a time when they should all sit to the sacramental feast which Christ had prepared for them. But it may be asked, Does this command of our Saviour to his disciples, authorise and enforce upon us an equal love to all who in these days sit down to the table of the Lord, when we know so many come thereto whose lives bespeak them enemies to Jesus? By no means, in the strict sense of the word. If a man to whose conduct I am a stranger, sitteth down with me at the Lord's table, making as good a profession as mine: as I would wish him to love me in the Lord, so should I love him. I should esteem him for his profession not as it is outwardly only, but as I hope it arises from an inward sense of those same divine things in which my own soul also delighteth. I receive him therefore as a member of Christ's church; my soul is drawn out in holy gratitude to God, that this man also has a relish for the sweetest delicacies of my master's table; and in christian love for him whom I desire to know and rejoice in,

in the Lord. But if I see any one at the Lord's table, whom I know lives an ungodly life and is an enemy to the Lord Jesus; do I hate this man? nay I cannot, though I cannot love him in such an unbounded measure as I love God's people. Do I hate this man? Nay, I rather weep over him, to think my Lord is dishonored by him, and that his own soul, knows not the value of that repast which he receiveth, nor partakes of it with that faith which alone can make it worth receiving. Do I hate this man? Nay, rather I pray for him, that if he goeth away this time without a spiritual hunger and thirst after Christ, he may come the next, feeling his own weakness, mourning his own depravity, lamenting his own ruin, and by faith receiving Christ in all his offices for his salvation, and in all his ordinances for his comfort. 2d. It is an union in regard to time and place. In regard to time—"*When ye* "*come together to eat* (says the apostle) *tarry one* "*for another.*" There is a mutual consent in these things, which it becometh Christians to cherish. All the virtues are of a social nature: and it is their being so, which gives a life and comfort to society, and makes virtue itself appear amiable among men: for though to pay a proper love to virtue for its own sake, we must consider it so lovely that it wants not the aid of foreign charms, yet we must allow that its native excellencies are set off to more advantage, when they are adopted by, and interwoven with social life. So in religion, there is a so-

ciable bond of union, by which every living member is united in one body, which in scripture is called the communion of saints, which is an admirable mean, when duly exercised, of keeping God's people from too great an intermixture with the men of this world. And shall the conviviality and cheerfulness of a festive board, equal and excel the harmony and spiritual peace of those who are met round the table of their common Lord, who come professedly joined by a spiritual and heavenly union to celebrate the most amazing, most incomprehensible yet most beneficial instance of love to sinful men? In regard to time then, see them met in one day and at one hour to partake of this spiritual feast, waiting each for the other, and all for the blessing of the minister in the name of God, whilst a solemn yet secret Amen, like a chorus adding harmony to a song, bespeaks a common assent, which is heard and noticed by the majesty of Heaven. In regard to time and place conjointly, the time in which this ordinance (according to the present order of all churches) is administered, is shortly after the finishing of public divine service, and some convenient place of the same building, where that public service is performed. And by this means the ardor of religious zeal, can hardly even in the most languid be supposed to cool between the different services; and the small removal of place, giving no hurry to the body, is less liable to disturb the serious thoughts by the intervention of unsuitable objects.

If any one should ignorantly ask, But supposing any one should feel disposed to eat this solemn feast alone, would not this be equally beneficial? By no means, for first how could it be the communion of saints. Now the communion of saints is an encouragement to every believer; and the secret use of this ordinance could by no means fill us with that joy and thankfulness which the sight of a company of pious and faithful men met together in one holy mind, is wont to inspire; and 2dly, how it would edify the members of Christ's mystical body, who as being joined, should move by mutual and general consent, and where would such choose to eat their solemn meal alone. Would it be in an empty church stripped of those living pillars of the temple of God, which for a while adorn his visible church below. What is a church? a solemn assembly of saints and holy men; as for the rest, where is the sanctity of naked walls?—Would it be at home? *If any man hunger* (says St. Paul in a fleshly and bodily sense) *let him eat at home:* and by inference we may add, if any man hunger in a spiritual and believing sense, let him meet with those who hunger thus also.

This leads us further in regard to order, to notice,

3d. That it be not done to satisfy hunger.

Some of the Corinthians seem to have received it for this end. But what character does St. Paul

bestow on this conduct? He calls it heresy, into which whilst many fall, they which are approved or preserved from falling, are made manifest.

Alas! that the word heresy, should be used as a term of reproach to the followers of Jesus, as well as a term denoting an abandonment of and dereliction from the simplicity of the gospel. Here it is taken in the latter sense, to designate a most dangerous innovation creeping into the visible church of God. We read of it as an awful instance of a dreadful corruption speedily rising up and gaining ground in a newly established christian church. Yet whilst we shudder at the thoughts of it, let us rejoice that it is an evil which can scarcely be committed in this present day? Yet we may ask, have we no similar heresy existing in the visible church at the present day. What means that lover of this world creeping with an unsanctified countenance and a corrupted heart, among God's little flock, to take with them his portion of bread and wine; yet not with them to take it through faith, in love upon, and thankfulness unto a crucified Lord, but to take it as a passport to the storehouse of wealth, and as the qualification to hold a lucrative place.

No hunger for bread, nor thirst for wine urges the wretch to take a larger portion than those around him: alas, he cares not whether the symbol or emblem touches his lips; but the hunger of civil preferment, and the thirst of avarice draws him

there, to the damnation of his gold-ensnared, and deceived soul. And oh! my country dost thou endure this? Ye holy ministers of the established church of this land, ye who have God's cause and the good of souls indeed at heart, will ye endure this? Ye enlightened senators of our land: august assembly to whom your country look, that in you may be blended worldly wisdom in its brightest splendor, with the wisdom which is from above; and the love of your country, with the supreme love of, and desire for the glory of God. Will ye endure this? Ye mitred heads, who profess by the Holy Ghost to be made overseers of the flock of God, who direct the convocation and sit in the parliament of this land, will ye endure this? And thou aged monarch and venerable sovereign, by Providence placed on the throne to rule over an enlightened and prosperous people, presiding also by the laws of this realm, as temporal head of the established church therein; dost thou endure this? Do ye all endure this? O that such a sense of the indecency and ungodliness of such a practice may soon fill your hearts, that the hand of the governors and governed in this realm, may rise with energy and love to God, to repel the most daring abuse of the most solemn sacrament ever made between Christ and his chosen.

9th. Verily, verily, I say unto thee, We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen, and ye receive not our witness. John iii. 11.

In the foregoing heads I have endeavoured to

prove the following propositions from the following scriptures, as 1st. To state the essential Divinity of Christ, from John i. 51. 2d. His being the Eternal God, from John viii. 58. 3d. His being judge of the whole Earth, from John v. 25. 4th. His equality with the Father, from John v. 19. 5th. His being the only spiritual refreshment for the soul, from John vi. 32 and 47. 6th. The importance of Christ in that sense for our Salvation, from John v. 24. 7th. The Blood of Christ alone cleanseth from all Sin, John vi. 53. 8th. The Necessity of seeing its Spirituality for our Good, from John vi. 36. In the present head a few words may be added to shew the nature of unbelief, viz. that it denies the testimony of Jesus, from John iii. 11. and (without wishing now to anticipate my subject) I shall then proceed, 10th. To shew the awful Nature of Sin, from John viii. 34. 11th. The Necessity of Regeneration, from John iii. 3. 12th. The Nature of Regeneration, that it must be wrought out by the Holy Spirit, John iii. 5. 13th. The awful Nature of denying Christ, from John xiii. 38. 14th. The Necessity of seeing him as our only way of Access to God, from John x. 1—7. and xvi. 23. 15th. That through Death alone we can reach Glory, from John xii. 24. 16th. That Humility is the Ground Work of Religion, from John xv. 16. 17th. That Christ is honoured in the Reception of his Ministers, from John xv. 20. *18th. That* the Sin of Man is the Cause of the Re-

deemer's sorrow, from John xv. 21. 19th. That faith in Christ is the only proper foundation of good Works, from John xiv. 12. 20th. That the name of Christ is a powerful motion for encouraging us to crave a supply of our Spiritual Wants at a throne of Grace, from John x. 23. 21st. That a Christian's Sorrow shall end in Joy, from John xvi. 20. and 22d. That his Death for Christ's sake shall end in eternal life, from John xxi. 18.

But to return. Unbelief is a virtual rejection of any subject as true, which is related unto us. Unbelief in human things, is this as well as in divine, though in the former it may be no sin, inasmuch as the thing testified of, may not be testified of according to truth: and furthermore, the difference of opinion on most temporal points is such, and the manner in which the mind views them so different, that no one is absolutely liable to blame for not thinking of them as his neighbour does: though it agrees with divine things in this, that the opinion of men alters not the essence or intrinsic merit or demerit of any object on which there is a difference of opinion. But unbelief in divine things is a sin; first, Because the thing testified of is of a divine origin, proceeding from that God who cannot lie. 2d. Because the difference of opinion arises from and is a proof of indwelling sin, and a principle of unholiness, which hates the standard of truth which God has erected. 3d. Because the standard of truth erected is a mirror reflecting all the amiable

perfections, (and he is composed of none other) of the God of truth. So that whosoever refuses God's standard to be the standard of truth, shuts his eyes to, and denies those amiable perfections which reside in God; and 4th. Because that standard of truth is not an invisible standard, concealed as it were like its author, by the very clouds of his glory, but exhibited clearly to us through the rays of his glory, in that mirror of truth, the gospel of the Lord Jesus. Hence in things divine, there is but one standard, which is the very fulness of the perfect mind and will of God, concentrated and revealed to us in his word. The witness of the word of God, or of Jesus Christ in the word, seems to comprehend two things, *viz.* 1st. That his speech was according to knowledge, and 2d. That his testimony was from the most intimate acquaintance, and ocular investigation; and to these may be added a 3d. The persons united with Christ in this knowledge and insight into the subject. Though the speech of Christ might be proved to be according to knowledge in all things in every part of creation, I shall confine myself in examining it to two particulars, *viz.* Divine, or belonging to God; and human, or belonging to the race of man.

First, Christ hath a knowledge of things divine: for he knoweth even the incomprehensible and unfathomable mind of God; "*No man knoweth the* "*Son, but the Father, neither knoweth any man* "*the Father save the Son, and he to whomsoever*

"*the Son will reveal him.*" Is it useless or unimportant here to observe, that the mind of Christ is as incomprehensible as the mind of God; from which may be argued that Christ possesseth also a most rightful and essential divinity by possessing the attributes and perfections of God? But further, it is a co-equal divinity, in which there is a continual interchange of the most perfect goodness manifested by each striving as much as possible to honor, and bring others to honor the other. But a still more important charge is committed to Christ, more important as it relates to us, than the mere knowledge of the perfections of the Father. I mean the power of communicating the knowledge of them to us in a way suited to our comprehensions, and in a degree fitted to our capacities. We never shall be able either in earth or Heaven to attain to that knowledge of the Father which Christ and himself possesses, for he is an unfathomable deep in which all our thoughts are drowned; though this must be said, that the greater knowledge we have of God in this life or that to come, communicated to us through Christ, the more joy and peace we shall have, and shall pant the more after further discoveries, both in this life and that which is to come: and there are two things in which even the perfect knowledge which Christ hath of the Father is essentially beneficial to us: 1st. In the knowledge which thereby Christ has, of the Father's perfect hatred of all sin; and 2d. In the knowledge which

he had, that though God's holy law required perfect obedience, and man could not give it, yet the Father would accept the perfect obedience of a substitute, perfectly holy, and perfectly able to complete the ransom, and to which office did Christ know, if he stood candidate he had of all the fairest prospect of being chosen: and this knowledge of the mind and will of the Father, did Christ possess even before (to speak after the manner of men's communication), the Father had imparted his mind to the Son; and this expresses how great the evil of sin itself is, which could thus be sensibly felt in the mind of the Son, as soon as in the eternity that was past, it was foreknown by the Father himself; and further, the readiness of Christ to offer himself on thus feeling the evil of sin, and how it affected the mind of the Father, even before (to speak again after the manner of men's communication), the Father had made known his mind to the Son: 2d. Christ had a perfect knowledge of things human, or belonging to the mind of man; in which first of the awful fall, and all its dreadful consequences to the race of man, this Christ knew from all eternity, and lamented, as it would bring such mischief upon us; 2d. Of the method of salvation which the Father would agree to, and as it relates to us, which those whom the Father had chosen and given unto him, would in due time, be led by his Spirit to accept: hence his knowledge is of particular characters, so that he knows them by name, and calls them by

name, by his Spirit in the work of regeneration; by his own cheering and comforting language in their progress towards complete sanctification.

2dly. We observe that the witness of the word of God was not observed only in this, that his speech was according to knowledge, but that it was from the most intimate acquaintance with the Father and ocular investigation of his divine dealings. "*I "know him,* (said Christ) *and if I should say, I "know him not, I shall be a liar like unto you*;" and in what instances may it be said, that Christ knew the Father? First, In that he knew that the Father would continue to him after his voluntary obedience to death, all those honours and all that glory which he possessed with him from all eternity, and that not so much as a matter of divine right on the part of Christ, which was indisputable, but on his atonement and all its offices for the good of man being completed as a matter of merit on account of the most perfect, patient, and satisfactory sufferings ever performed, which had in view the glory of God in the salvation of man, and that he would bestow upon those whom he had given him, *viz.* the elect, all the glory and honor he had promised unto them for the sake of their covenant head.

3dly. I briefly notice the persons united with Christ in this knowledge and insight into the subject. The subject it will be recollected is divine, as it regards all the wisdom of the Godhead, beaming forth in the contrivance of a method to save fal-

len man, and human as it regards the making it known powerfully and efficaciously in the hearts of the elect who were to be saved. But a plurality of persons is here spoken of, "*We speak that* "*we do know, and testify that we have seen*; *and* "*ye receive not our witness.*" Witnesses are characters often spoken of in the Holy Scriptures. They are in general spoken of as fixed or appointed, and not mere accidental observers of any transaction, and are intended in general to point out either the solemnity or atrociousness of what is done. In the simplicity of the patriarchal ages we find them employed by design, and that with the most solemn meaning, in confirmation of some covenant entered into between different parties. Thus when Laban in wrath pursued after Jacob, they were at last induced by the good Providence of God, who watched over Jacob, to enter upon some compact by which they should neither of them pass over to the other, to hurt him; "*And Laban said unto Ja-* "*cob, Behold this heap, and behold this pillar,* "*which I have cast betwixt me and thee*; *this* "*heap be witness and this pillar be witness, that I* "*will not pass over this heap to thee, and that* "*thou shalt not pass over this heap, and this pillar* "*unto me, for harm. The God of Abraham,* "*and the God of Nahor, the God of their father* "*judge betwixt us. And Jacob sware by the fear* "*of his father Isaac,*" Gen. xxxi. 51 to 53. and what witnesses more true and more solemn in their

testimony than those works of Christ whilst here below, which bear testimony to his divinity and divine mission, "*The works which the Father hath* "*given me to finish, the same works that I do,* "*bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent* "*me,*" John v. 36. But to speak to the point as to the fellow witnesses of Christ, whose testimony he could appeal to, with his own, and equally press upon our attention; "*There are three that bear* "*record in Heaven, the Father, the Word, and* "*the Holy Ghost, and these three are one. And* "*there are three that bear witness in earth, the* "*Spirit, and the Water, and the Blood, and these* "*three agree in one,*" 1 John v. Many who wish to set aside the divinity of Christ and the Holy Spirit, will say as other infidels have done before them, this passage is an interpolation. But I thank God the proof of their divinity rests not on one or even a few passages of scripture: it is as difficult for the infidel to controvert, as it was for Hercules to slay the Lernean Hydra with whom it is fabled, fresh heads seemed to rise up as fast as those it possessed were beaten in pieces. So this from the first to the last of the scriptures, is interwoven in their very composition, so that if this be taken away their beauty and harmony is decomposed and taken away. Let us consult a few more scriptures; "*God is my* "*witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel* "*of his Son, that without ceasing I make mention* "*of you always in my prayers,*" Rom. i. 9. where

the Father is evidently spoken of, both from the agreement with verse the 8th, and also from the Son being mentioned in verse the 9th. Again, "*Grace be unto you, and peace, from him which* "*is, and which was, and which is to come; and* "*from the seven spirits which are before his* "*throne: and from Jesus Christ who is the faith-*"*ful witness, and the first begotten of the dead,* "*and the prince of the kings of the earth,*" Rev. i. 5 and 6, where Christ is emphatically called the faithful witness: and no wonder, for it is declared elsewhere, "*The testimony* (or witness) *of Jesus is* "*the spirit of prophecy,*" Rev. xix. 10. Seeing that it gives prophecy all its beauty, and all its harmony, and all its vigor, by its bearing witness to the fulfilling of the law and the prophets in the mediatorial offices of Christ.

Again, "*For by one offering, he* (Christ) *hath* "*for ever perfected them that are sanctified;* "*whereof the Holy Spirit also is a witness unto us,*" Heb. x. 15. Hence these three witnesses agree in one. To conclude this subject, Christ reproaches certain characters, "*Ye receive not our witness.*" Is it a few individuals only who merit this reproach? Alas! alas! it is all mankind; all absolutely in their unregenerate condition, and the unregenerate for ever if they continue so. And what testimony of Jesus do all men in their natural state deny? First, the necessity of regeneration, in which they say with Nicodemus, "*How can a man be born*

"*when he is old? Can he enter a second time* "*into his mother's womb and be born?*" John iii. 4. And second, The nature of regeneration, though expressly stated thus: "*The wind bloweth where* "*it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof,* "*but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither* "*it goeth: so is every one born of the Spirit,*" to which it argues thus with Nicodemus, "*How can* "*these things be?*" John iii. 8 and 9. But I enter not on these two points, *viz.* The necessity and nature of regeneration, as I shall soon have to speak of them under two distinct heads.

10th. Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin. John viii. 34.

Sin in its nature, progress, effects and consequences is set before us in the most odious colours throughout the Bible: the testimony of prophets, patriarchs, priests, kings, under the old dispensation of John the Baptist, of Christ himself, his apostles, disciples, and martyrs in the New, above all the voice of God from beginning to end, both of old and new, is against it. Death now, and hell for ever, insatiably open their jaws at its commission, and eagerly grasp their appointed victims, though as these delight in sin and are therefore enemies of God, their testimony is to be regarded, not because they rejoice in its commission, but because their rejoicing proves it even still more hateful in the sight of God. The nature of sin in the gross may

be considered as hostile to the purity and perfe tions of God; and in truth, when we have said t we have said all, though a most tremendous all i for those engaged in it: for first it implies the most impurity of the creature, and next it brin down the most certain and most terrible vengean of the Almighty. 1st. Is the impurity of the cr ture little thought of? Wherefore? Is it because is really small? or is it because it is slightly m tioned in the Word of God? On the contrary, t Word of God is plain and positive as to the natu and consequences of sin. We but just quit the a count of the world's creation, when our attention excited to a deed of man for which he is subject to the dreadful displeasure of God. Death is spok of as the wages of this transgression, which w sin is entailed as a dreadful curse against all Adam posterity. We hear around us the faithless c Why should all mankind be punished because one? Alas! have we so little respect to our fath Adam, that whilst equally guilty before God, w disown him as our covenant head, and disavow o friendly yet sorrowful relation to him who was t father of all men? Above all, have we so little r spect to God himself who declares he will have th sin of Adam punished upon all his posterity? Wh do we allow death to be the consequence of o deriving our descent from him? This is inco sistent, if we disallow that sin is ours by being h *descendants*. Death reigns not in the blood whic

sin has never tainted. Christ our great high priest in his untainted divinity could not, did not die; and it was only imputedly at last, as bearing our sin and its fruits, of which death was one, that his human nature died at all. But I stop here to draw an awful conclusion, oh! that it was duly considered, by all those who CONSIDER THEMSELVES TOO PURE, to be involved in the guilt of Adam's transgression, *viz.* that if we die not imputedly by Adam's transgression, the imputation of Christ's righteousness can never make us alive; we are strangers to that dispensation of mercy which a God of truth has given, not to those who need no physician, but to those who are sick: and even "*Over "them that had not sinned after the similitude of "Adam's transgression,*" Rom. v. 15. But sin brings down the most certain and most terrible vengeance of the Almighty; the name of God as by himself proclaimed, is "*The Lord—that will by "no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity "of the fathers upon the children, and upon the "children's children unto the third and to the "fourth generation,*" Exod. xxxiv. 6 and 7.

And this punishment to the third and fourth generation, is inflicted even for the breach of the ceremonial law. What then must be the case, when the spiritual law of God is broken by man, and all his most holy commandments set at naught. In viewing further this subject, we may observe two things, 1st, What it is to commit sin; and 2dly, What it is

to be the servant of sin. Sin is the transgression of the law, hence to commit sin is to transgress the law, but sin is also the denial of the gospel, to which last dispensation may more properly the sin against the Holy Ghost be referred, which according to most commentators, relates to an open and shameful violation of truth, sinning against it as it is unfolded in the gospel, and that more particularly when the mind has seemed to have advanced some way in grace, when the understanding has been considerably enlightened, and an open profession of the gospel has been espoused. But 1st. as to the law. The law of God is comprehended in these two things. "*Thou shalt love the Lord thy God* "*with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and* "*with all thy mind. This is the first and great* "*commandment. And the second is like unto it,* "*Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On* "*these two commandments hang all the law and* "*the prophets,*" Matt. xxii. 37 to 40.

Hang all the law, said Christ, meaning every particular contained on the two tables, or Ten Commandments. But this may further be illustrated by a short view of the Ten Commandments themselves.

1st. "*I am the Lord thy God which brought* "*thee up out of the Land of Egypt, from the* "*house of bondage. Thou shalt have none other* "*gods before me.*" If this be considered as spoken literally as first intended, to the chosen nation of

the children of Israel in their national capacity, or as it may be to every chosen person of the true spiritual Israel: each of those characters is here called upon to acknowledge the signal deliverance of the Lord of Hosts, and the interposition of his hands, in delivering his chosen people from every enemy, temporal and spiritual, and the declaration, Thou shalt have none other God's but me, is intended to teach them to look to God as their righteousness, strength and salvation, confessing their own inability to turn to God, or deliver themselves from bondage. Nothing does the Lord hate more, and nothing is more like setting up other gods beside him than a self-righteous spirit, glorying in the work of our hands, rather than in the handy works of God.

2nd. Thou shalt not make thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing, that is in Heaven above or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the waters beneath the earth. Thou shalt not bow to them, nor worship them, for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the sins of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me, and shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments.

As the first commandment is intended to restrain from setting up the idol of self-righteousness in the heart in opposition to the sovereign grace, or to the influences of the Spirit of God; in which it is confined to spiritual action. So this second de-

notes the natural action of the mind, and is intended to guard against those idols of the affections, which alas! we are all too prone to set up, by an over fondness for the gifts of God's providence, as riches, friends and the like. But this is, in the language of scripture, to love the creature more than the Creator. If it be a matter of surprise to us why the love of the creature should be more spoken against than even the setting up of self-righteousness, it may not be amiss to consider whether it is really an object of more divine displeasure than the latter; and first we may observe, it is indeed guarded by a penal sanction, even the visiting the sin upon the posterity of the offender: whereas it may be said of self-righteousness, &c. that it is punished only in the offender himself; as it is the law of grace, that every man shall stand or fall by his own works, that is, that he shall be judged independent of the works of others: but then the latter is most tremendously awful in its consequences, being a sin against the Lord the Saviour in his glorious title. "*I am the* "*Lord thy God which brought thee out of* "*Egypt.*"

3d. Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain, for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.

Oaths in the hands of mortals we observed in the beginning are solemn things: the name of God should be too much revered to be called in as a *witness* to the quarrels or crimes of wicked and fallible men: the spirituality of this precept includes

not only profane swearing, but also false swearing, and even swearing in the mere sense of calling God unnecessarily to witness where our cause may be otherwise just.

4th. Six days shalt thou labor and do all thy work. But the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou nor thy son, nor thy daughter, nor thy man servant, nor thy maid servant, nor thine ox, nor thine ass, nor any of thy cattle, nor the stranger that is within thy gates: that thy man servant and thy maid servant may rest as well as thou. And remember that thou wast a servant in the Land of Egypt, and that the Lord thy God brought thee out thence through a mighty hand, and by a stretched out arm: therefore the Lord thy God commanded thee to keep the sabbath day.

We may observe here the fixing of a sabbath epoch for three purposes, *viz.* 1st. For to remember the servitude in Egypt, 2nd. That it might be a day of solemn rest for man and beast, 3d. That it may be hallowed to the Lord our God—and then we shall leave any practical remarks to the summing up of the whole. 1st. To remember the servitude in Egypt, and this for many reasons; first, because it was a cruel unprecedented and unreasonable bondage; for it was too severe for human nature well to sustain, it was so constant as to debar from the exercise of any kind of religious worship, the observance of which even the most wicked and

idolatrous nations keep up to their false gods: and they were commanded to make bricks after a certain tale or ratio, without having the requisites provided. 2nd. Because it was a spiritual bondage: for they were driven to the necessity of asking of their merciless tyrants, liberty to worship God according to their consciences. 3d. Because it was a typical bondage, intended more especially to shew both the Jews and all the succeeding race of man, the awful effect of sinning against God: and all these the Jews were to remember that they might never act a tyrannical part over others, and that they might prize that religion which God had given them; and thus far after the immediate re-institution of the sabbath at this particular time, as other epochas have been marked out by the learned, in which the sabbath was enforced by a divine appointment*.

2d. That it might be a solemn rest for man and beast; and this first, That man might remember the solemn resting of God immediately after the sixth day's creation, when with the utmost complacency and delight in his own finished handy work, and with a supreme love and good-will to all his creatures, he rested from his work and blessed it. 2d. That he might praise God for placing him here, but of this more presently, 3d. That he might impart if we may so speak, of his solemnity and

* As see among others. Watson's Theological Tracts, page 29—31.

reverence to God's day, to the very brutes of his creation: and in this view especially, when the contemplative mind after having served God and worshipped him in his public ordinances, shall retire to the solitude of nature, to indulge an heavenly reverie, must it not encourage the ardor of his thoughts, and help them to rise towards God, to see the noble and plodding ox, the faithful, and useful horse, and other animals, whom on other days he borrows with thankfulness from the hand of providence to assist him in his daily occupation, now quietly resting from their labours, and mutely thanking their bounteous Creator, joining their earthly vocal Lord in an unspeakable yet feeling instinct of praise to their common benefactor: instinct of praise I say, for thus is the brute below the man. Instinct is given to the brute, and all the thankfulness it can render to God is to use that power in seeking regularly the supply of its wants. Reason to man; and reason well used will lead man to praise God, for the bounties of providence as well as the riches of grace; whilst he owns his dependence, blesses with his voice the hand of God, and by faith and reason, not by mere instinct, craves a supply for his complicated wants.

3d. That it may be hallowed to the Lord our God. Whatsoever is done is to be done to the honor of the Lord God; and if this rule is to be observed in ordinary things, how much more on

that day which the Lord hath in a peculiar manner marked for his own. It must be considered as our bounden duty to devote every particle of time to the immediate service and worship of God; but as God hath enjoined upon us social and relative duties also, so he hath for this end relieved us from the obligation of a constant immediate service to himself, with this proviso, that what we do for ourselves and others, have an eye to his honor and glory. And this is reasonable, and deserves our warmest praise. Now instead of a constant service, God hath enjoined upon us the observance of one day in seven, in which we are ordered in other parts of scripture not to do our own deeds nor think our own thoughts, that is, to keep them unremittingly towards God in all we think or do.

Thus far in regard to our duty to God. We observe, 2d. What is due from us to our neighbour, which may be traced out in the second table, or remaining six Commandments.

5th. Honour thy father and thy mother as the Lord thy God hath commanded thee, that thy days may be prolonged, and that it go well with thee in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.

The motive to this duty proves what we advanced just now, that all our relative duties should have something of God's glory in view, for the enforcement is, "*As the Lord thy God hath commanded thee.*" This commandment seems to have very

great importance attached unto it, in the Word of God, from the comment of St. Paul upon it when he says, " *Honour thy father and mother, which " is the first commandment with promise,*" Ephes. vi. 2. and perhaps it may not be amiss to enquire a little into the reason thereof: and first, it may be observed, that parents are worthy of honour from the very nature of things; in which, 1st. Because they are our parents. *Marriage is honorable to all,* (says St. Paul) and if our parents are placed in an honorable situation from begetting sons and daughters in their own likeness, their children must partake of their parents honor, by deriving being through their honorable connexion. 2d. Because they watch over us in infancy, childhood, and up to man. Who can tell the anxiety of a parent's heart, watching, providing, preventing, succouring, defending, hoping, loving, fearing, lamenting, yearning over, and if godly, travailing over them again in birth, till Christ be formed in them the hope of eternal glory. And in this sense, who knows how often an anxious parent may go, with tears and prayers and sorrow of heart to a throne of grace, imploring pardon for the sins of the children, or to bless God for the kindlings of grace and the beamings of his Spirit in their heart. But more particularly, 3d. Because their parents are the honoured means of their being brought into the world. I distinguish this from the first particular, which relates simply to their begetting them into the world, in

which sense the brutes do with their offspring, though even there this difference arises, that whereas the offspring of brutes cast off their dependance, allegiance, &c. to their dams, as soon as they can, man is bound to his parents by ties of gratitude after the tie of dependance ceases, and this further for this very reason, that when old age visits their parents, their children may return the obligation with ten-fold tenderness, and bring down their grey hairs with comfort to the grave.

Now every mean which God uses is honored by his use of it, and though in the mere use made of it, the brute and the man answer the same end, namely, that of producing their like; yet the end of the use is not the same in this, that they do not both produce their offspring in the likeness of God. This is designed of God to be confined to man. Alas! that man in this should not fill up his allotted station. But the fall hath done this through the sin of the fall. And though man in the ruins of his reason, and in his speech, carries yet a lordly appearance, and a tone of authority in some degree in the sight of other animals, yet in the sight of God, the wreck of his fallen nature is a miserable degraded and unworthy object, which nothing but the rich grace of the Father manifested in, through, and for the sake of the Son, prevents from falling for ever into hell. But 2d. This commandment is reasonable, because by the visible object of an earthly father, we ought to consider our duty to

our heavenly one. God in one sense is the Father of all flesh, as being the author of their being, and the giver of every mercy. Man has fallen and forfeited this right of having God for his father for ever, and if any new relationship is made to subsist it must be according to the good pleasure of God in the way of his appointment, agreeably to his justice as well as mercy, by means which he shall ordain, and in conformity (as it respects the objects chosen) with his own free and sovereign choice: and all these things centre in Christ.

6th. Thou shalt not kill.

Alas! is man in arms against God's creation? In arms against the blessings which God has given him? Yea, and worse than all, in arms against his species. The boy at school, torturing a beetle or a butterfly, knows not the infernal malice of him who sheds the blood of his brother. And though cruelty to any dumb creature is insufferable, yet more especially that towards a brother, whose blood will from the ground cry aloud to God for vengeance. Murder it may be observed was the first open fruit of rebellion, and the first awful proof of man's obstinate hatred to God in spite of offers of mercy: "*For* (says the apostle John) *he that loveth not* "*his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love* "*God whom he hath not seen,*" 1 John iv. 20. and the first open act of sin after the fall that we have any account of in holy writ, was that of Cain slaying Abel, which arose from a cause intimately con-

nected with the profession of religion and the worship and glory of God, for the same apostle adds, "*And wherefore slew he him? Because his own* "*works were evil, and his brother's righteous**," 1 John iii. 13.

7th. Neither shalt thou commit adultery.

As adultery, fornication, whoredom, and the like, are taken in different senses in holy writ, it may not be amiss to enquire a little into the nature of the terms which it may be observed are synonymous, at least so far as this, that they point out the same sin, though they may mark it out in different stages, or degrees of aggravation. Adultery is of two kinds, temporal and spiritual. The first of which comprises two things, 1st. A sin against the Holy Ghost, and 2d. *viz.* A sin against one's own body. "*What* (says the apostle Paul with evident "marks of surprize and abhorrence) *know ye not* "*that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost* "*which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye* "*are not your own?* Perhaps it will be said by some, that this passage refers particularly to God's elect people, who are more particularly temples of the Holy Ghost. I grant it from what follows: "*Ye are bought with a price.*" But still every man breathing is a temple of the Holy Ghost? 1st.

* It hath been observed by many, that the first blood ever shed, was shed in the cause of religion; Alas! what a proof that fallen man till renewed by God's Spirit hates holiness, and every *thing that* aims at perfection in God's sight.

Because the Holy Spirit resides in him as the principle and support of animal life: as the Psalmist observes, "*Thou sendest forth thy Spirit, they are* "*created: thou takest away their breath, they die,* "*and return to their dust,*" Psalm civ. 29 and 30, and as the influence of the Holy Spirit in breathing into man the breath of life, consisted in breathing pure life, as witness Adam who was sent complete from the hand of God, so this pure creature must be a fit residence for the Lord the Spirit, for which alas! it was unfitted by man's fatal transgression and fall. 2d. It is a sin against one's own body. "*Every* "*sin that a man doeth is without the body, but he* "*that committeth fornication, sinneth against his* "*own body,*" and this first by debasing even the body to the level of that of brutes. If by the impurity of the body the Holy Spirit departs and will no more reside therein, all light, all love of good, every generous, noble, elevating thought is extinguished, and man that is without understanding is like the beasts that perish: 2dly. By joining it in league with the devil; "*Know ye not, that to whom ye yield your-* "*selves servants to obey, his servants ye are whom* "*ye obey, whether of sin unto death, or of obe-* "*dience unto righteousness,*" Rom. vi. 16. and it may be observed our subjection to satan, is a willing subjection. 3d. By joining it to an harlot, "*Know* "*ye not, that he which is joined to an harlot is one* "*body? for two saith, he shall be one flesh.*" Alas! alas! what a miserable being is he who is

joined to an harlot. What can he bear? Not the day, for the day shudders at his deeds. Not the light of the moon, he shrinks even at this. Not the light of conscience in even its natural lustre; for this if it speak at all, speaks for the honor of God. Not the eye of God, for this would pierce him through, and he would shrink as nothing from his sight: poor deluded people, they are caught by a strange woman whose path is in the way to hell. 4thly. I cannot pass by observing, briefly, by introducing numberless diseases into the human frame. Delicacy forbids to mention the disorders arising from the illicit and sinful connexion of the sexes? Can he be said to respect his own body who plunges into a sin, that may undermine his constitution, and bring him to a speedy or torturing end. But I forbear, observing only with these are connected the stings of conscience.—The body and spirit are oft in unison together, and have a mutual effect on the joys and sorrows of each other; oh then, when conscience embitters the moments of pain, by giving a retrospect to past transgresson without any antepast to the balm of gilead, the physician of souls! But whilst we suppose God so peremptory against the sin of fornication, adultery, &c. among his people in their relative situation, can we think he will pass these crimes when committed against himself? Hence they have, 2d. a spiritual sense in scripture. Under this, spiritual adultery comprises, 1st. idolatry. " *But draw near hither ye sons of the sorceress, the*

"seed of the adulterer, and the whore. Against "whom do ye sport yourselves?—inflaming your- "selves with idols, under every green tree," and as if it was not enough to have the affections set on stock and stones, these idolaters are charged with offering human victims to their pretended gods, *"Slaying the children in the valleys under the "clifts of the rocks,"* Isaiah lvii. 3, 4, 5. 2d. Ignorance of God and resting in lies. *"Oh that I "had in the wilderness a lodging place of way- "faring men; that I might leave my people, and "go from them; for they be all adulterers, an as- "sembly of treacherous men. And they bend their "tongues like their bow for lies: but they are not "valiant for the truth upon the earth: for they pro- "ceed from evil to evil, and they know not me "saith the Lord,"* Jer. ix. 2 and 3. 3dly. Adherence to false prophets. *"Notwithstanding, I "have a few things against thee, because thou suf- "ferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a "prophetess, to teach, and to seduce my servants "to commit fornication, and to eat things sacri- "ficed to idols,"* Rev. ii. 20. Mark the expression which calleth herself, not which is a prophetess: and no doubt the woman Jezebel is intended to represent the spirit of false prophecy which should pervade and corrupt the primitive church. Thus the prophets of Baal, were but false prophets. 4thly. Adherence to antichrist himself. If by antichrist we are to understand more particularly the papal power, we have

him set forth under two characters intending to represent his temporal and spiritual power, *viz.* the beast and the false prophet which is engaged in spiritual fornication to the dishonor of God, and the great detriment of his spiritual worship: hence he is called "*Babylon the great, the mother of harlots, and abominations of the earth,*" Rev. xvii. 2. But the Lord's eyes are upon such doings; "*True and righteous are his judgments, for he hath judged the great whore, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand,*" Rev. xix. 2. 6th. Slighting spiritual birth-right. "*Looking diligently,* (says the apostle Paul) *lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled; lest there be any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birth-right,*" Heb. xii. 16. 7th. Joining nationally with ungodly nations. "*But thou didst trust in thine own beauty, and playedst the harlot because of thy renown, and pouredst out thy fornications, on every one that passed by; his it was.—Thou hast played the whore also with the Assyrians, because thou wast insatiable; yea, thou hast played the harlot with them, and yet thou couldest not be satisfied. How weak is thine heart, saith the Lord God, seeing thou doest all these things; the work of an imperious whorish woman. In that thou*

"buildest thine eminent place in the head of every "way, and makest high place in every street; and "hast not been as an harlot in that thou scornest "hire; but as a wife that committeth adultery, "which taketh strangers, instead of her husband," Ezek. xvi. 15, 28, 30 to 32. These few are in brief some of the instances of spiritual adultery mentioned in the scriptures.

8th. Neither shalt thou steal.

As robbery, theft, and stealing, in the gross sense of the word, are abominable vices and bring men to the scorn and infamy of the society in which they live, little would remain to be said here was it not the case, that the spirituality of the precept is alas often robbed of its force, by those arts of fraud, over-reaching, &c. by which even men of much sense and conscience of duty impose upon and deceive each other, to the disgrace of their christian character if they have any, and even of worldly reputation if they aim solely at that. On this occasion I take pleasure in transcribing the words of a pious late author, whose works yet are among us, and live in substance in the hearts of every honest man. "It is the temper of a christian constantly to "act towards his fellow-creatures with justice.— "Have you *riches* in such abundance as to create a "numerous set of dependants? You will exercise "christian justice towards them all; you will scorn "to grasp after the utmost farthing your estates can "produce, till your tenants, wedded as it were to

" the place of their nativity, groan beneath the load
" of rents unreasonably advanced; you will perceive
" an inexpressible degree of injustice also in the
" fashionable custom of owing large sums for your
" furniture, equipage and dress, whilst your trades-
" men are almost at their wit's end to pay for the
" things you call *your own*, whilst they are daily
" tortured with the dilemma of bankruptcy, if they
" recover not their debts; or of ruin, through the
" cruel resentment of their opulent creditors if they
" do.

" Your rule is positive and express, *Owe no man*
" *any thing, but to love one another*, and the op-
" posite practise though punishable in the rich by no
" human law, (except in extreme cases) is marked
" as the object of God's abhorrence, and the cer-
" tain way to fall under the severity of his displea-
" sure: *Behold the hire of the labourers, who*
" *have reaped down your fields, which is of you*
" *kept back by fraud, crieth: and the cries of them*
" *which have reaped, are entered into the ears of*
" *the Lord of Sabaoth. Ye have lived in plea-*
" *sure on the earth, and been wanton.* Jam.
" v. 4, 5. The application of this scripture from
" the day labourer to every person in trade, whose
" money is unreasonably withheld, will be obvious
" and effectual to you, who regard the reproofs of
" God in his holy word.

" But are you occupied yourself *in trade* or mer-
" chandize, then the energy of your christian prin-

" ciples will shew themselves in a still stronger " light. You will not suffer the love of money to " bias or corrupt your conscience. You will take " no advantage either of the ignorance or necessity " of those with whom you traffic, by putting bad " things into their hands for good, or by exacting " an exorbitant price. You will neither take, nor " use, nor detain through force or fraud, what is " your neighbour's property.

" Now if any one should say, it is not possible to " live so honestly in the present state of the world. " Yet the motives for *you* to be punctually just and " righteous in all your dealings if you have any " title to the character of a Christian, must still pre- " ponderate.

" Should it be supposed that regard for yourself " and family will gain the ascendency, and be " prompting you to use common arts of fraud; I " answer, that even this pressing temptation will be " counteracted by the unalterable declarations of " your God: ' *Wo unto him that buildeth his* " *house with unrighteousness and his chambers by* " *wrong,*' Jer. xxii. 13.

" But, if instead of the place of authority and go- " vernment, the all-wise God has fixed you in that " of subjection, *as a servant or an apprentice,* you " will faithfully follow the directions which the " scriptures gives you for the exercise of justice in " that condition of life. You will abhor the thought

" of wasting, embezzling, or secreting to your own " use any of your master's money, goods, or provi- " sions. You will neither do this yourself, nor " basely connive at others who are wicked enough " to do it. This conscientious honesty you will re- " gard as one of the most substantial proofs that " you know God.

" Another important instance in which every " real Christian manifests his impartial love of jus- " tice, is *by paying those customs*, which are by " law enacted, and from thence become his earthly " sovereign's right. This very thing is expressly " mentioned and enjoined by the command of your " God. You are to *give tribute to whom tribute*, " *and custom to whom custom is due*. Besides " this most express command, you have the exam- " ple of your Redeemer.—You will therefore re- " nounce the custom too common in trade, of at- " tempting either to bribe the king's officers to be- " tray their trust, or of deceiving their utmost vigi- " lance. You will renounce such practises as ut- " terly irreconcileable with any regard to Christian " duty." Venn's Complete Duty of Man, 6th edit. Sunday 23, chap. xxiii. pages 178, 179, 180, 181. 183 and 184.

And thus far I have quoted from this excellent and pious author on a practical subject, namely on the wrong nature of fraud, theft, and the like, in the most strict and yet most scriptural sense of the

word. May the Lord apply it to the consciences of them who feel not yet its propriety and force.

9th. Neither shalt thou bear false witness against thy neighbour.

As all the wrong practices of men towards God, arise from a want of good will to God, so all the wrong actions by which men injure their fellow creatures, arise from a want of love towards our fellow-creatures, the prime origin of which is a want of love to the Creator. But the law of God hates this, and considers it as a principle deservedly to be reprobated because of the principles of heart from whence it springs. Slander is a dangerous weapon, and paltry is his reputation, whose is built on the ruin of that of others. A witness against falsehood, violence and oppression we are not forbidden to bear: but we are forbidden to exercise an uncandid and even unnecessary exposure, even of our neighbours failings. There is a meekness and humility in judging or speaking of the faults of our neighbours, which becomes every one who knows that he himself is liable to err, even in perhaps greater matters. See the proud Pharisee, "*God be thanked I am not as other men are, ex-*"*tortioners, unjust, or even as this publican.*" Yet alas! this man withal had a proud and carnal heart, and the publican "*went down to his house* "*justified rather than the Pharisee.*"

10th. Neither shalt thou desire thy neighbour's wife, neither shalt thou covet thy neighbour's house,

his field, or his man servant, or his maid servant, his ox, or his ass, or any thing that is thy neighbour's. See Deut. v. 6 to 21.

The foregoing is a summing up and concluding of all the precepts that regulate our duty to our neighbour. Hard it is indeed to fill up this branch of duty. How often do we secretly, and often openly too, cherish the wish, that something which our neighbour has was ours. Now I shall briefly observe that this has an evil tendency two ways, 1st. In teaching us to envy and even hate our neighbour. "*From whence*, (says the apostle James) *come* "*wars and fightings among you? Come they not* "*hence, even of your lusts, that war in your mem-* "*bers? Ye lust and have not, ye kill, and de-* "*sire to have, and cannot obtain; ye fight and* "*war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not,*" James iv. 1, 2. The world teems with adultery, rapine, and wrong. Many burn for those whom the law of nature, and the rites of marriage, so put out of all lawful reach, that even to look upon them with a small desire, is *a great sin*. Many are inflamed with a desire to possess the goods, the lands, the wealth, the happiness of others; and for these ends embroil themselves in contest and are busied in scenes of blood. It is needless here to detail the horrors of war and slaughter. I proceed therefore to observe, that coveting our neighbours goods has an evil tendency; 2nd, In teaching us to arraign God's providence in the distribution of his blessings.

Whatever arraigns the goodness of God whether in providence or grace, must be derogatory to his sovereign dignity, and must prove man a rebel to his lawful authority. Do we see it? Alas we do. All hearts must plead guilty to a secret repining against God's providence, and a wish to possess the lot of another rather than our own.

This predominates in the worldly minded and selfish man every day, and too often in the breasts of God's people, oh! how should they pray against this as they love God, and would love their fellow creatures for his sake.

Thus far I have endeavoured to trace by a short view of the ten commandments, what it is to commit sin: it remains to be observed what it is to be the servant of sin. "*His servants* (said Paul) *ye* "*are whom ye obey.*" But obedience must be of the heart, hence we are said to have "*obeyed from* "*the heart that form of doctrine delivered unto* "*us.*"—Hence willingness and determination prove man a sinner. A man may have a law in his members warring against the spirit of mind, and bringing him into captivity to the law of sin in his members, yet if like Paul he lament it, feel it an intolerable burthen, and the cause of wretchedness, and withal be led by faith to cry out with Paul, that his deliverance is in Christ Jesus, then he cannot be said to be the servant of sin, seeing he is an adopted child of God, chosen in Christ Jesus, and under the guidance of his good spirit. That man is the

servant of sin, who loves it and lives in it as his native element, rolling it under his tongue as a sweet morsel without seeing his wretchedness, and wishing to be freed from it.

With a few practical remarks I conclude.

The first and leading point of gratitude in every child of God is, deliverance from the Egyptian bondage of sin, of which the yoke of Pharoah, is a memorial and emblem for all generations. And what more grievous and intolerable than this, to be in a state of the most dreadful enmity to God, which must bring down the most deserved and most excruciating torments of body and soul, on the head of the offender for ever.

And if God is pleased (as scripture proves he has been pleased) to save all whom he hath chosen in Christ Jesus, what a worthy subject of gratitude for those thus chosen whilst they see multitudes, not thus graciously looked upon, but doomed to perish in eternal woe. Oh the blessed sovereignty of God doing what he will with his own, displaying his mercy in the salvation of thousands, upholding his justice in the damnation of thousands, vindicating his honors, and glorifying himself, without being worthy of the smallest imputation in his dealings towards all. If then such is the gracious character of God need we wonder to hear him so strenuously command the sole worship of his own holy name, when to this supremest and most righteous self-love, is added the greatest good will towards his

creatures; and in return for this love of God what should we do, but love him continually, ardently, and without a rival? Can we refuse to spend one day in seven in his immediate service, when he permits us to spend the rest in our lawful callings, not so to spend them that he shall be forgotten, but that whilst our hands are engaged below, our hearts may be uplifted, and even our hands be working with an intent that God may be glorified thereby. If then we love God supremely, can we refuse to love his creatures our brethren in the flesh, and this in two relations. 1st. Our earthly parents: these are God's representatives, and his honored means of bringing us into his life, his means also of preserving us in infancy, childhood, youth, even up to man, his means of providing for all our wants, of instructing us in necessary knowledge, in the cultivation of reason, both in necessary temporal science and with a due dependance on his Spirit, at which every parent should aim, in the knowledge of his God as the father of all flesh, but more especially of all his chosen in Christ Jesus. 2nd. All mankind. Can we then destroy his image, made at first by a privilege given to no other creature in his likeness, and then constituted Lord of all below: can we debase it, by taking the members of Christ and making them the members of an harlot? Can we further deprive another of those blessings God has given him, and unjustly rob him of the same, or can we endeavour to blast his reputation, and rob

him of the fairest jewel which a man possesses on this side the grave? Can we, lastly, envy our neighbour the enjoyment of his lawful comforts, bestowed gratuitously by God and earned by the sweat of his brow?

All these laws man has broken; yet we are not by that released from an obligation to fulfil the same: though not a covenant of works, they exist as a preceptive authority enforced by God on all his creatures, to be fulfilled by themselves or their surety, to whom as they are unable to fulfil them by themselves, they must by faith look up on pain of eternal death, and that surety is Christ the angel of the covenant, the righteousness and strength of his chosen people.

11th. John iii. 3. Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.

The necessity of being born again, is loudly and repeatedly enforced in the Holy Scriptures; nor is it inconsistent with the nature of things: for if a man be dead whether as to his body, or as to his soul, as being in the latter case dead in trespasses and sins, he must experience a reviving power, operating upon him in his passive state, (and man is passive in the work of regeneration), before he can perform the functions of a rational or spiritual man. Not that in either case, a man must a second time enter into his mother's womb, but that in both

cases, he must return from a state of non-action and almost non-entity, like that of a babe before it is born, before he can again act like a man. This our Lord intimates in the 5th verse, on which I enlarge not now, lest I anticipate my subject, but on which I shall speak, when the nature of regeneration comes to be considered.

The necessity of regeneration may be enforced from many topics, as first, from the happiness temporal and eternal, which man by sin has lost, and which it behoves him out of even self-love to endeavour to regain, by any proper means which are put into his power: 2d. From the love of God which man ought to cherish, whom by his sin he hateth, which love is the very element of a pure, holy, and god-like spirit, the want of which, proves man in a state of enmity, and liable to the first and second death. 3d. From the love of God to us, whereby he loves a chosen remnant, and hath proposed to save them, through the sending of his Son. 4th. From its being the only method by which we can enter the kingdom of God. Of these in their order.

1st. From the happiness temporal and eternal, which man by sin has lost, and which it behoves him, even out of self-love, to endeavour to regain, by any proper means which are put into his hands.

In God's dealings with Adam before the fall we hear only this language, "*In the day that thou "eatest thereof, thou shall surely die.*" What

shall we say to this, but that man, threatened with death in case of disobedience, and unable without God's Spirit to continue in persevering obedience, (which Spirit being withheld by God in consequence of the foreknown fall, and in consistence with his eternal purposes of grace to be unfolded thereupon) hath fallen, and is liable to temporal and eternal death therefrom? Nor do I conceive persevering obedience could have entitled Adam to eternal life, as a reward of the same. And for this reason, that as all things were formed for Christ's sake, and all evil permitted to shew forth and display to man, God's eternal counsels and covenant of grace, any thing received or claimed as a reward by Adam for obedience, would have militated with those eternal counsels as being a part of a covenant of works: every thing of which must be contrary to the method of salvation unfolded in the gospel of Christ's grace. But passing this by,

Man is become subject to eternal death, for the wages of sin is death. Even self-love, was not inducement enough to Adam to continue in obedience, when God's Spirit was suspended, as it is not sufficient to enable him to return to obedience, whilst the same suspension of God's Spirit continues. Now in this state of death, Adam had no more feeling for, and relish of the holiness of God, than if he had never been born. And though it may be fairly presumed (nay though it would be the utmost injustice to our covenant

head Adam - not to presume), that Adam never went the lengths of sin, which thousands of his posterity daily do; still in the sight of God by reason of his transgression, he stood as hateful as they do, till recovered by the grace of God in Jesus Christ: revealed typically and imperfectly to him, yet so clearly, as that faith and hope might spring up in him, and a higher kind of love and gratitude than ever, might animate his bosom and cause him to rejoice in God. Could we trace the feelings of Adam's heart when he and Eve sewed fig-leaves together; when dissatisfied with so poor a covering for sin, they rushed as it were into the thickest of the trees of the garden of Eden, to hide themselves from the presence of the Lord, what should we see but a mixture of shame and remorse struggling against the agitations of a quick sighted yet newly polluted conscience, and endeavouring to hide, what its dictates would tell them, never could be hidden from the all-searching eye of God. Here too we see the strugglings of self-love in our first parents, without any of the influence of the Spirit of God; leading them to patch up a self-righteousness and tattered covering, which it was well for them that God in his grace removed aside, substituting a better, even the righteousness of faith. As good works done before the grace of Christ, and the inspiration of the Spirit are nothing worth, so self-love working in these before regeneration, can produce no holy fruit unto God, for the passions of the mind hav-

ing our own ends and not the glory of God in view, are tinctured with sin. Hence the necessity of regeneration, not to smother, eradicate and destroy the passions of the mind, but by breathing into them the breath of the Holy Spirit, to give them a new and heavenly bias, worthy of man's mind and worthy of God. Then self-love holding the second place, whose first is the glory of God, becomes a noble principle, through the liberty of the Spirit by which we serve God with perfect freedom: then we endeavour not by carnal self-righteous means, of our own devising: but by those proper means devised by the Spirit and put into our hands, by him who appointeth the means as well as the end in sinner's salvation, to serve God in holiness and righteousness all our days, being regenerated by his Spirit and chosen by his grace in Christ Jesus: and from this may the necessity of regeneration be enforced.

2nd. From the love of God which man ought to cherish, whom by his sin he hateth, which love is the very element of a pure and godlike spirit, and the want of which proves man in a state of enmity, and liable to the first and second death.

The love of God is the only noble principle that can fill the soul of a rational creature. It is that only which can give it a relish for immortality and eternal life. Love is the acme, and centre of all God's perfections: they rest upon it and they are safe, they surround it and it is safe. They stand as

it were in the forefront of battle; whilst it like the precious standard of God's sovereignty, is encircled in the middle. They feel and resent every insult offered it. It animates the rest in the cause of God and truth. Are they insulted, the tidings are borne unto it and it sends them back armed with God's hottest vengeance, to punish the rebels against God's justest will. Love! is it a principle of good will? Yes to those who have a good will to the God of love? No meek, insensible, and impassive principle: but the very essence of God's holiness, and the most dreadful avenger of sin. It arms the thunderbolts of Almighty vengeance to punish the enemies of God; and delights in nothing and will admit to communion nothing, but perfect holiness and unspotted truth. Man is called to love holiness and truth. In his upright unfallen nature he does, seeing he is made in the image of God, and filled with the breath of his Holy Spirit. The principle once imparted ought to be continued, cannot be laid aside by the creature without sin, cannot be annulled by God without proving him an enemy to his own holiness, and that he is not such, witness the strivings of his Spirit in the power and efficacy of the cross, bringing sinners in all ages and countries, in spite of the world, flesh and the devil, to love him in Christ Jesus as their chief and only desirable good. Sin is the cause of our hating God. It began in Eve before she tasted of the forbidden fruit, even when she listened to

the seducing tale of Satan persuading her she should not die, when she observed it was good for food and pleasant to the eye. It began in Adam before he tasted the forbidden fruit, even when he beheld the yieldings of Eve, without warning or reproof, and without a blush or a pang received the fruit into his hand. Alas! that fatal listening to the voice of a tempter. It hath peopled hell with ruined souls for ever. It would have ruined every soul in hell for ever, but for the intercession of Christ according to the eternal purpose of God, securing his love from all imputation of screening the offender, heightening his love by the saving of the offender, through the perfect righteousness, obedience, sufferings, and atoning death of a chosen ransom. Love it may be observed is the element of a pure and godlike spirit. 1st. In a native unsinning state, as Adam's before the fall; and 2d. In a regenerate and renewed state, as believers through the mediation of Christ, without it we are at enmity with God: for love is the fulfilling of the law. Adam before his fall, loved, (and by the light of nature and the teachings of the Spirit) fulfilled the law: after his fall, he fulfilled it not in himself, nor in the law of nature at all, nor by the beamings of the Spirit, save as it led him by faith to embrace the perfect righteousness of a typically crucified Lord, typically crucified in the slain victims with whose skins he was covered, as a lively representation of the great sacrifice of Christ in the end of the world

to put away sin. If this enmity remaineth, what is the consequence? We are liable to the first and second death, and stand obnoxious to the righteous judgment of God. Now the fruit of the Spirit is love. But we cannot bring forth the fruits of the Spirit unless we are born of the Spirit. Now the works of the flesh are idolatry and hatred: hatred of God, and delight in self-righteousness: we are at enmity with God and he with us: and if he go away we must die in our sins. Hence further may the necessity of regeneration be enforced.

3d. From the love of God to us, whereby he loves a chosen remnant, and hath purposed to save them through the sending of his Son.

It is no mean proof of the Necessity of Regeneration, that God resolved to save fallen man through Jesus Christ: through the visible effect of Regeneration, whereby whosoever is so born, knows and feels that he tastes and enjoys the salvation of God. God looked from Heaven, to see if any were good: and his sad observation was, No not one. What then was the desert of all men? Death and all the sad variety of woe. Why then have not all experienced the desert of their rebellion against their Maker? Because he would have mercy in saving a remnant of our race: "*Except* "*the Lord of Hosts had left unto us a very small* "*remnant, we should have been as Sodom, and* "*we should have been like unto Gomorrah,*" Isaiah i. 9. The love of God as observed before is in-

flexibly opposed to, and strenuously resolved to punish every sin: but when through the offered mediation of Christ, God the Father can consistently with his honor look upon, hold out pardon to, and receive into communion the sinner, then also the divine love is manifested to such a sinner, brought by the grace of God into communion with him. It may be not amiss just to take a very short and compendious view of the nature of the covenant made for the good of God's people. And first the Father says, I will, that a certain part of mankind should be saved through the intervention of my Son, these I choose, and will send my Son to redeem. The Son says I agree to die for these: and "*all that the Father giveth me shall come unto* "*me*;" and again, "*Father I will that they whom* "*thou givest me, be with me where I am*;" and to the end that these may be brought to acknowledgment of the truth, which they cannot be without regeneration, the Holy Spirit is promised them, I will put my Spirit within them and write my law in their hearts: and Christ in agreement with this, "*I will pray the Father and he shall give you* "*another comforter that he may abide with you* "*for ever. Even the spirit of truth*," John xiv. 16, 17.

But to consider our election more particularly. When a man by the grace of God hath been brought to see and consider himself as an immortal and eternal being: who after having passed the dark

valley of the shadow of death, must launch at once into a state of unalterable happiness or woe, and is led to reflect on the importance of salvation, how must he like the apostle Paul, feel continual heaviness and sorrow of heart, first for his brethren and kindred in the flesh, and next for his friends and neighbours to whom he is often ready to call in to partake of his joy: though this sorrow for others, does not and cannot destroy the principle of joy and peace which a man finds in believing. Election (nor let any man start at the word), is that infinite counsel and fore-knowledge of God, and that gracious settlement of his love whereby he saveth whom he will, as we may even learn under the Old Testament, or law dispensation, when he says in Deuteronomy, "*I will have mercy, upon whom I "will have mercy,*" and the apostle Paul speaks of the "*called according to God's purpose,*" and then adds, "*whom he did foreknow, them also he did "predestinate,—whom he did predestinate, them "also he called,*" Rom. viii. 28, 29, 30. and to add further an indisputable testimony, *viz.* that of Jesus himself, who declares "*many be called but "few chosen,*" Matt. xx. 16. Further in considering this subject, four things may be noticed, *viz.*

1st. Election is a sovereign act of God.

The Lord has a right to do what he will with his own. And what do we by nature, deserve that he should do unto us? Why that he should con-

sign us over to the pains of hell for ever. Those who feel not their own vileness in that spiritual sense in which the scripture lays it down, may indeed cavil at the secret decrees of God, but it is to their own eternal shame and confusion of face. And those who do feel powerfully their sins, are made willing by the Spirit of God, to receive this wholesome doctrine, that they are saved by the sovereign will and good pleasure of God. And if we consider that God has a sovereign right to condemn to the pains of hell, all his sinful creatures, without distinction: can we see nothing lovely in God, when we view him saving some according to his own will, and by his own power, on condition of a suitable satisfaction being paid to his justice, which suitable satisfaction, (as men could not give) God himself hath provided by choosing *his own Son*, as a ransom for his people, and choosing *them* in Christ, to be redeemed through his blood. Hence it is called "*the election of grace, which* "*the election* (or subjects of that election) *hath ob-*" *tained, and the rest were blinded,*" Rom. xi. 5, 7.

2nd. Election supposes not any human merit.

It seeks up its objects often from the vilest of the vile, and always from those whose hearts are at enmity with God. Thus Jehovah speaks to his prophet Ezekiel; "*None eye pitied thee, but thou* "*wast cast into the open field, to the loathing of* "*thy person in the day that thou wast born.*

"*And when I passed by thee, and saw thee pol-*
"*luted in thine own blood, I said unto thee when*
"*thou wast in thy blood, Live; yea I said unto*
"*thee, when thou wast in thy blood, Live,*" Ezek. xvi. 5, 6. Furthermore, a Mary Magdalene out of whom Christ cast seven devils, is chosen of God and saved, brought from a common prostitute, to glorify God, and to receive Christ as her lawful husband. Above all, the thief on the cross, who till the ninth hour, was blaspheming Christ with his companion, is chosen of God, and is led by his spirit to cry out, "*Lord remember me when thou*
"*comest into thy kingdom;*" to which, hear the gracious reply of our Lord, "*Verily I say unto*
"*thee, this day thou shalt be with me in paradise,*" Luke xxiii. 42, 43.

3d. Election is accomplished actually on the heart of God's elect, by the power of God's Spirit in Regeneration in his own appointed time. The soul is passive in the hands of the Spirit when the work of regeneration is first begun upon it: this may be traced by observing the various metaphors under which a state of sin and rebellion against God are expressed, as first men are said to be dead in trespasses and sins, and then the work of regeneration and the beginnings of spiritual life are ascribed wholly to God: "*And you* (says the apostle) *hath*
"*he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and*
"*sins,*" Ephes. ii. 1. 2d. They are said to be in

darkness or to be even darkness itself; "*Ye once* "*were darkness but now are ye light in the Lord:*" and in this state, Christ says to his church, and consequently to every individual who composes that church, "*Arise, shine, for thy light is come,* "*and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee.* "*For behold, darkness shall cover the earth, and* "*thick darkness the people: but the Lord shall* "*arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon* "*thee,*" Isaiah lx. 1, 2. 3d. They are compared to an inanimate and stupid lump of clay which has no life, no motion, and can only act as it is acted upon. Thus the church says to Christ, "*But* "*now, O Lord, thou art our Father: we are the* "*clay, thou art the potter, and we are all the* "*work of thine hand,*" Isaiah lxiv. 8. To which the apostle adds, "*Nay but, O man, who art thou* "*that repliest against God? Shall the thing* "*formed, say unto him that formed it, Why hast* "*thou made me thus? Hath not the potter,* "*power over the clay, of the same lump, to make* "*one vessel to honor, and another to dishonor.* "*What if God—endured with much long-suffering* "*the veselss of wrath fitted for destruction. And* "*that he might make known the riches of his* "*glory on the vessels of mercy, which he hath afore* "*prepared unto glory. Even us whom he hath* "*called,*" Rom. ix. 20 to 24. And thus also we are chosen by the power of God's Spirit; "*Elect* "*according to the fore-knowledge of God the Fa-*

"*ther, through sanctification of the Spirit,*" 1 Peter i. 2.

4th. Only the elect can come to God.

"*No man* (says Christ) *can come unto me, ex-*
"*cept the Father draw him,*" John vi. 44. "*All*
"*that the Father giveth me shall come unto me,*
"*and him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise*
"*cast out,*" John vi. 37.

And in this drawing, there is a need of the regenerating influence of the Holy Spirit, "*Except*
"*a man be born of the water and of the Spirit,*
"*he cannot enter into the kingdom of God,*" John iii. 5. Man has by nature, neither will nor power to turn to God. Man may boast of the freedom of his will, but what is it? Only to do evil. And how employed? Only in the service of the devil. We are all by nature children of wrath, and must remain so, till by God's Spirit, we are drawn to come unto him. And when God hath in his choice fixed upon any, then he ordains that they shall be led by his Spirit, to embrace that way of life and salvation, which he hath laid open in Christ Jesus, for the benefit of all God's chosen people. I speak not of election as if no choice was made in the mind of God, till the subjects to be saved are arrived at a suitable age, in this world. Election is an eternal purpose and fore-knowledge of God: in correspondence with which, we hear also of his love being eternal. Effectual calling is the act, by which those who are thus eternally chosen, are brought

forward to the new birth, and born again for the heavenly kingdom. I cannot help adding a fifth remark, as the hinge on which the election of God's people turns, and is safe, *viz.*

5th. *Our* election arises out of the election of *Christ* as our living head. Christ was chosen of the Father from all eternity, to be the Saviour of man, when he should fall. Are we members of Christ's mystical body? He is chosen to be our head. Are we streams? He is chosen to be the fountain. Are we a chosen seed? He is the choice vine, in whom alone we can bear fruit to the glory of God.

Further, the Necessity of Regeneration may be enforced,

4th. From its being the only way by which we can enter the kingdom of God. Need there be any dispute in this matter, when the scriptures are so express on the subject, when it is declared of "*the "testimony of Jesus,*" that it "*is the spirit of pro-"phecy;*" when facts every hour confirm it, in the multitudes dying around us, dying as they have lived, some blaspheming God, others sighing with the very last grasp for a little more of this world, some groaning with the fear of torture, cursing the moment when they were born, or begging for a respite that they might have space to repent. What are the expectations of those who die in their sins? Some few indeed hope in God's mercy, which as they have abused even past salvation, consistently

with the honor of God, they perish with a lie in their right hand: the greater part feelingly expect approaching horror, and inwardly confess the reality of torments, which in life they dared to deny. We turn to the regenerate. Behold their death-bed! A solemn scene! Behold them feelingly alive to the frailties, transgression, infirmities and sins of a life begun, and maintained in enmity with God, in which state they must have continued to the last, but for the preventing and regenerating grace of God.—Further, behold them feelingly lamenting the awful backslidings of their hearts after the æra of their spiritual birth, after they had begun their militant state here below. Here were a subject for despair indeed, more dreadful even than what the wicked feel: and with this have God's chosen people been dreadfully harassed for a little season, before they gained a final conflict? But everlasting grace prevents despair's duration. The scene brightens—evil seen to the bottom, and acknowledged in all its enormity, danger beheld in the jaws of death, confessed as a just demerit for sin, brings the warrior to the foot of the cross. There he lays his earthly laurels down, and confesses, 'Lord I 'was unworthy to wear them,' to fight under thy banners, and in thy name contend 'for victory:' yet he lays them down in hopes of exchanging them for brighter laurels given by his conquering Lord: he disclaims their merits, and cries out, 'Lord 'thou art worthy, for thou hast redeemed me to

'God by thy dear blood.' And then is he dead? Hath he departed with a fluttering yet firm hope, with a lively though imperfect faith, with an ardent though sometimes interrupted love? Now these failings and interruptions are no more: whilst a voice from Heaven proclaims, "*Write, blessed are "the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth. "Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from "their labors; and their works do follow them,*" Rev. xiv. 13.

And thus far on the Necessity of Regeneration. The nature of it remains to be considered.

12th. Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. John iii. 5.

The nature of regeneration is here comprehended in a few words: not thereby to express that regeneration is a slight and easy thing, but that there is a oneness of operation in the heart of God's elect people, whereby they are brought out of darkness into God's marvellous light. Nor is the work difficult with God with whom all things are possible; but with men who have, added to all their other sins, an evil heart of unbelief, tempting them to depart from the living God. Whatsoever is flesh is opposed to whatsoever is Spirit. And there is no compromise, between an actual enmity, such as exists in all by nature, and an actual friendship, such as subsists only in the heart of God's chosen. Tak-

ing regeneration to be a total change in a fallen nature; we may observe its operation on the minds in two things, which in fact comprehend all, though of lesser moment, *viz.* in bringing the regenerate man to confess and plead for the divine dignity and purity of the moral law, and the honorable, safe, and glorious intention of the gospel.

The moral law is a copy of the heart of God, transcribed at first on the heart of Adam before his fatal transgression, which copy the impress of sin defaced upon him to the dishonor of God, and the hurt of his own soul. Yet the sin of man however felt and confessed, does not alter the nature of God's holy law which remains inviolably the same, notwithstanding all the changes of man. Thus Paul declares, "*I was alive without the law "once, but when the commandment came, sin re-"vived, and I died. For sin taking occasion by "the commandment, deceived me; and by it slew "me. Therefore the law is holy, and the com-"mandment holy, and just, and good,*" Rom. vii. 7, 9 and 10.

To the like purpose speaks the royal Psalmist, "*I have seen an end of all perfection,*" so that the creature cannot be justified by the deeds of the law, yet, notwithstanding this, "*thy commandment "is exceeding broad.*" We may observe a few particulars in which the regenerate confess the law is against them, yet from which they cannot argue against the divine dignity and purity thereof; as

1st. Because it condemns them to eternal death.

There was a time when the present believers were children of wrath, even as others. The law followed close at their heels, demanded a payment of their debt, or sought their life. They were hunted down by the terrors thereof and would have been slain thereby, but that the preserving goodness of God kept them alive, till that appointed time when they were to be effectually called in Christ, put into him as their chosen head, and brought to feel the comforts and consolations of his Spirit.

2d. Because it requires perfect obedience.

This the sinner will not endeavour to pay, so dreadfully hardened is the heart of every unregenerate man, and as all men are unregenerate by nature, even those who are afterwards regenerate, so even the latter are subject to the rigor of the law of God in their unregenerate state. This they are led fully to confess, when by the operation of the Spirit their eyes being opened on the spirituality of the law, they feel they stand condemned, for the want of that perfect fulfillment which it requires. This however does not lead a christian to undervalue the law, as I soon shall endeavour to shew for several reasons, but rather more highly to prize the law.

3d. Because even perfect obedience, if it could be made cannot merit pardon.

It may be observed of the greatest part of the regenerate seed, that soon after being born again *they set* about working in their own strength; feel-

ing the difference between that complete enmity in which they once lived towards God, and the dawnings of friendship towards him, they are led to conceive great things in regard to perfect filial obedience, feeling that they are growing fast to the stature of the measure of the fulness of Christ, they think they must always continue thus to grow and thrive. Do they fancy that if they could obtain perfection they could merit pardon? Alas! how contrary to the word and wisdom of God. Like children they advance rapidly in growth, but like them, the nearer they grow to man, the slower the progress towards perfection. And even supposing perfection attainable though it might even merit pardon for the future, or the time in which we continue therein, what must become of the past? What must merit for past transgressions. A perfect obedience can merit for the moments of perfection alone. Hence regenerate man, must be brought sooner or later to see that nothing he can do, can merit pardon for past, present, or future transgressions. That it is by grace alone he can be saved: through the merits and righteousness of Christ Jesus our Lord.

4th. Because the law requires satisfaction for every thing done short of perfect obedience.

Here we revert again to Adam's fall. For what did the perfect law of God take hold upon him? For what did it condemn him to death, temporal, spiritual and eternal? Was it for a series of trans-

gressions? Was it for a complication of crimes? Was it for a re-iteration of crimes committed against numerous reproofs, warnings and exhortations? No. One solitary crime (which included and was the fruitful parent of many others) is alledged in scripture, is charged home upon him; is considered as a breach of the whole law, (which method of divine dealings, is also perpetuated under the gospel dispensation, see James ii. 10.) and for this he must die. This single instance (if it had been the only one ever known or committed in the world, seeing that by it Adam fell short of perfect obedience), required satisfaction to be made to the hands of divine justice, and involved Adam and all his posterity in the eternal punishment due to his offence. Involved Adam, both as the immediate agent of the crime, and also as the federal head of all that were to spring from his loins, *i. e.* all mankind; and involved also all his posterity, as being themselves wrapt up in the covenant with their federal head. Now we hear of the unregenerate denying daily the covenant relation by which they are united to Adam; leaving in the lurch as it were their first parent, who sinned himself under the power of temptation, acting on a then innocent yet peccable heart. But oh! of what a blessing do they by such a conduct judge themselves unworthy, for if they fall not in Adam, how can they be raised up in Christ? If they perish not in one federal head, how can they be saved in another, even in the angel of

the covenant, who came to seek and to save them that are lost? But this I have observed before.

5th. Because the law unrelentingly pursues them till the last farthing is paid.

Man could not pay. An imperfect fallen creature, could not make up a perfect obedience: which perfection must be marred, at the moment of committing sin. Hence the awful sentence, "*Dust "thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return,*" Gen. iii. 19. Further, observe the spiritual intent of our Lord's parable; "*Therefore is the kingdom "of Heaven likened unto a certain king, which "would take account of his servants. And when "he had began to reckon, one was brought unto "him, which owed him ten thousand talents. "But for as much as he had not to pay, his Lord "commanded him to be sold, and his wife and "children, and all that he had, and payment to "be made,*" Matt. xviii. 25. The sequel informs us that his Lord in great compassion freely forgave him all: but in consequence of a want of like forgiveness in the servant towards his fellow-servant, his Lord justly renewed the claim; in consequence, "*his Lord was wrath, and delivered him to the "tormentors, till he should pay all that was due "to him.*"

Now in these things, must every regenerate man feel how the wrath of God and his justice are against him: by their eyes being enlightened, they feel it in more force than the unregenerate do, so

that it forces them to cry out, "*O wretched man "that I am, who shall deliver me from the body "of this death?*" Rom. vii. 24. Yet they cannot argue against the divine dignity and purity thereof.

1st. Because Christ died to give life to his chosen people.

"*He that entereth in by the door is the shep-"herd of the sheep.*" Christ entered into this world through the door of human nature, and thus proved himself a divine shepherd. Further, Christ says, "*I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd "giveth his life for the sheep. I lay down my "life for the sheep.*" John x. 2. 11 and 15. Now in the Word of God, the world is divided into sheep and goats: one of which, namely, the sheep, will have the privilege of sitting at God's right hand, or partaking of those spiritual blessings which he hath in store: the other, namely, the goats, will sit at his left hand, or be debarred the enjoyment of those spiritual blessings which the righteous enjoy; from this may be supported and argued, what no human reasoning can deny, that Christ laid down his life, only for his sheep, the elect, the chosen: and this then may comfort the regenerate under the curses of the law, which whilst they were in a natural state condemned them to eternal death, and may give them the blessed certainty they shall never experience it, seeing Christ hath satisfied for them, when he laid down his life for his sheep.

2d. Because his perfect obedience is offered instead of theirs, both in quantity and merit. "*Above* "*when he said, Sacrifice, and offering, and burnt-* "*offerings, and offering for sin, thou wouldst not.* "*Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will O* "*God,*" Heb. x. 8, 9. In speaking of quantity of Christ's perfect obedience, we mean not to suggest any idea of a gross sum, limited as to degree, but to suggest that the whole of Christ's meritorious and perfect obedience is offered unto God the Father as a satisfaction for all his chosen people, for that breach of God's law which they have made, imputedly through Adam their federal head, and actually through their own transgressions. In regard to merit, what more comforting to believers, than amongst all their views of their own wretchedness and imperfection, to look to that perfect lamb, which God hath himself provided to be the atonement for, and ransom of his people.

3d. Because he hath actually satisfied for the imperfect obedience as well as the sins of his people. Let it not be supposed that our imperfect obedience merits part, and leaves the perfect obedience of Christ to merit the rest. This would indeed be to mix human things with divine: to daub with untempered mortar as the scripture expresses it, to the dishonor of Christ and the confusion of our own souls. Nor can any thing imperfect, satisfy and merit for a perfect obedience, for nothing

done in our strength can profit our souls, if offered in the way of merit, atonement, or justification.

Further, the regenerate cannot undervalue the law.

4th. Because it admits of a surety.

Though no surety was promised to Adam, in case of his transgressions, nor yet after his transgression till he was tried and condemned; yet it may be gathered from this, that had none been admitted, we should have had no need of a gospel. The whole of the law must have consisted in threatenings; the coming of Christ himself would have been needless, and man himself must have been either his own surety, or suffered the punishment he deserved. And further, of what use would have been the types and shadows of good things to come, which are unfolded in the law, if those good things never were to come; if a surety was not admitted; and if a priest, intercessor, and dying ransom were not allowed, in the wisdom of, nor sent forth by the power of God.

We see however a surety promised under the Old Testament, sent under the New: typified under the Old, fulfilling the types in the New. Born under the law, (whose dispensation, though it decayed gradually from the destruction of the first temple, was not totally abolished, till the coming of Christ and the final ruin of the second temple), the law acknowledged its sovereign Lord, received

into open arms the Lord Jesus, a babe at Bethlehem, yet the king of Kings: supported the purpose for which he came, *viz.* to magnify the law and make it honorable by fulfilling its requirement, saving sinners agreeably thereto; by fulfilling its requirements in his own person; in his sufferings and obedience to the death of the cross. And feeling that the law for Christ's sake submits to the blotting out of the hand writing of ordinances against them: for this cause the regenerate prize the law; count it holy just and good whilst it condemns, seeing it acknowledges the coming, suffering, merit, death, resurrection, ascension, intercession, and eternal kingdom of Christ in bliss, over all whom he hath chosen.

13th. Verily, verily, I say unto thee, The cock shall not crow, till thou hast denied me thrice. John xiii. 38.

Boldness in the cause of God and truth is an admirable feature in a Christian's character, and zeal is laudable when it has the honor of God for its end. Yet much humility is wanted that the boundaries of grace may not be passed, and that an unsupported arm of flesh be not lifted up for a divine end. We see an instance of Peter's boldly defending his master, with an ardent, but not with an humble zeal; and even when reproved persisting in his determination, without duly considering the weakness of flesh and blood. To consider the subject a little more fully, we will 1st. trace the par-

ticulars of Peter's conduct, and 2dly The consequences or the awful nature of denying Christ.

Peter had been lately reproved of Christ, for his unwillingness to suffer our Lord to wash his feet, and when he was forewarned of the consequence, viz. that if Christ washed not his feet, he had no part with him, his excess of zeal hurried him to the other extreme. So that he cried out, "*Lord! not "my feet only, but also my hands and my head.*" The strange conduct of Judas, and this inexplicable language of our Lord, declaring that one of his disciples should betray him; the unfathomable thirst, that he to whom he should give the sop should betray him; the giving of the sop to Judas, the hasty departure of the latter on receiving it, the language of Christ on the occasion, "*That thou doest, do "quickly.*" The apostrophe of Jesus whose meaning the disciples knew not, "*Now is the Son of "Man glorified, and God is glorified in him.—"Ye shall seek me, and as I said unto the Jews, "Whither I go, ye cannot come; so now I say "unto you;*" these things roused a spirit of enquiry in the mind of the disciples, and kindled a flame of love for their Lord. Peter burning with zeal and affection for Christ, "*said unto him, Lord "whither goest thou? Jesus answered him whi-"ther I go, thou canst not follow me now; but "thou shalt follow me afterwards. Peter,* (in-"flamed still more in his zeal, by any opposing "circumstances) *said unto him, Lord why cannot*

"*I follow thee now? I will lay down my life* "*for thy sake.*" Another Evangelist has added that Peter, "*spake the more vehemently, If I* "*should die with thee, I will not deny thee in any* "*wise,*" Mark xiv. 31. See also Matt. xxvi. 35. Alas! the sequel informs us how sadly Peter kept his resolution, how he was unmanned, and unchristianed too, (if I may so speak) that thrice he denied his blessed Lord, once before a weak and harmless damsel, and once with bitter oaths and curses. Well was it for Simon Peter that his master had prayed for him, that satan should have him not, to sift him as wheat as he desired. Having premised these things, I observe

2dly. The consequences or awful nature of denying Christ, and these are two-fold: 1st. To those so denying. 2d. To those who hear the denial.

1st. To those so denying; and this according to their general character, as first, witness Judas, he denied and betrayed his master, the awful nature of which was soon visible, for he hanged himself and his bowels gushed out. Alas! this man from a devilish principle denied his Lord: he went to his own place, to suffer for ever the punishment due to the foulest crime. 2d. Witness Peter, he went out and wept bitterly. He suffered pain of conscience, and anguish of heart, and remembered with bitterness, yet with humility and circumspection, his fatal denial all his life; yet he could not fall into perdition, because Christ prayed for him

and determined to defeat the devilish designs of Satan, to enlist this saint of God under his banner. Oh the blessed effects of being in Christ; Satan may desire to sift us as wheat, yea he may have his will so far as to sift us as wheat, yet if we are in Christ, he can only get the chaff for his portion, and after all the wheat must be gathered into the garner of God.

2d. To those who hear the denial. If the character of Jesus were unknown to those around the judgment hall, what must they think of the religion of Jesus; that if it leads men to lie, to curse and to swear, little indeed then has it to boast; and it is to be lamented that the imperfections of God's people in all ages, have caused the wicked to speak ill of our Lord. Oh how circumspect should Christians be in their lives, and conduct, and conversation; and if the character of Christ was known, how little and mean, must a denying and blaspheming Peter look in the eyes of all around him, for observe the men of this world are the most quicksighted on the failings of the righteous; nor do they hold for the latter that charity, nor bear them that love, that would lead them to put the best construction on their unjustifiable conduct. The consequences of God's people denying Christ are awful, as they lead God's enemies more to blaspheme; more to degrade a precious Saviour, and more to shut their eyes, and harden their hearts against his gospel: and for these things God's peo-

ple must meet with stings of conscience, rebukes from God's Spirit, and often persecutions from the ungodly, to the end that they may sincerely repent in dust and ashes, and learn more circumspectly to walk and to please God in all things. The consequences of God's enemies denying him, are eternal shame and confusion, more embittering the portion of their cup and heating more the flames of hell. Well, one truth this doth teach us; oh that we may humbly rejoice in it as becometh Christians: that whilst the sins of the unregenerate do more call down the anger of God's justice against themselves, the sins of God's people, cause him more to increase his loving kindness, forbearance, and tender mercy towards them, to the increase of their obligations to him, and to the furtherance of the glory of his own great name.

14th. Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheep-fold, but climbeth up some other way; the same is a thief and a robber. John x. 1.

Then said Jesus unto them again, Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep. John x. 7.

If we consider the awful distance at which sin hath placed man from his God, the necessity of a return, if we value our own safety, the necessity of God's vindicating his own honor by the punishment of sin, however the sinner himself may be remitted, we must see that these things can be done con-

sistently only through a Mediator. Man acknowledges the utility of a Mediator in temporal things. To avoid expence and useless litigation, to bring things to a speedy adjustment, and to enter without partiality into the real merits of a case, men refer their quarrels to arbitration. A third person called in by the joint consent of both is chosen to decide the controversy to the satisfaction of those concerned. Strange! that man can see not his interest in spiritual as well as temporal things. To avoid expence, the expence of a man's own blood which is forfeited to the law of God, and the loss of his eternal happiness as the demerit of his crimes, to avoid useless litigations with the infinite God, which can only end in shame and confusion of face, to bring things to a speedy adjustment, so that a man may know even on this earth, how matters stand between him and his God for ever, to enter without partiality into the merits of his case, so that man may without prejudice weigh well his conduct and that of God, and condemn himself as the sole aggressor; that God on the other hand, may advance his claim against man,—these are fit subjects for arbitration; for these a third person is wanting to be chosen by mutual consent, that he may decide the controversy. Behold then Christ Jesus chosen first by God, seeing he ought to have the first choice, as being the injured: to be chosen by man on the other, and this for these purposes; 1st. To prove the injury, 2d. To state the damages,

3d. To offer compensation. "*Now* (says God to prove how he was injured, and that in the slighting the Lord Jesus to whom as his well beloved he had given his vineyard, by which observe the Mediator between God and us, had a right to be totally against us, as being himself injured by us), "*will I sing to my well beloved a song of my* "*beloved touching his vineyard:* (here it seems also the Lord Jesus had complained of his vineyard to the father who gave it him), "*My well* "*beloved hath a vineyard, in a very fruitful hill.* "*And he fenced it, and gathered out the stones* "*thereof, and planted it with the choicest vine,* "*and built a tower in the midst of it, and also* "*made a wine-press therein, and he looked that* "*it should bring forth grapes, and it brought* "*forth wild grapes? And now, O inhabitants* "*of Jerusalem, and men of Judah, judge I pray* "*you, betwixt me and my vineyard. What could* "*have been done more to my vineyard, that I* "*have not done in it? For the vineyard of the* "*Lord of Hosts, is the House of Israel, and the* "*men of Judah his pleasant plant; and he looked* "*for judgment, but behold oppression; for righte-* "*ousness, but behold a cry,*" Isaiah v. 1—7. And what shall man say? Shall he disallow the complaint of the most high God against his transgressions, and deny his righteous and faithful word! "*If* (says the scripture) *we say that we have no* "*sin we deceive ourselves,*" 1 John i. 8. Rather

let us confess with God's church: "*Behold, thou* "*art wroth, for we have sinned.—But we are all* "*as an unclean thing.—There is none that calleth* "*upon thy name, that stirreth up himself to take* "*hold of thee. Be not wroth very sore, O Lord, nei-* "*ther remember iniquity for ever,*" Isaiah lxiv. 5, 6, 7 and 9. 2d. To state the damages, these are numerous and highly aggravated; we will state a few: the 1st. Is the marring God's image. The result of the consultation of the blessed Trinity on the formation of man was, that he was to be made in the image of God; perfect, holy, upright, like his divine original, though in a state of probation and liable to fall. He fell, and by his fall, assimilated himself willingly to the image of that deceiver who is the enemy of God. Hence he marred God's image in himself, became every thing contrary to perfection, holiness and uprightness, and made himself unworthy of that life, which proved his high and divine original. 2d. The deflowering Eden, "*The* "*Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden,* "*and there he put the man whom he had formed,*" Gen. ii. 8. Is it an improper question to ask what became of Eden, after man was expelled from it? I trust not, for though scripture is silent upon it, we have two ways of judging concerning it: the first is the general curse on the earth for man's sake, "*Cursed is the ground for thy sake, in sor-* "*row shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy* "*life,*" Gen iii. 17. The second, is the testimony

of profane History. Where is Eden? Its hedges are broken down, and the wild boar out of the wood hath wasted it. See Psalm lxxx. 12, 13. It is laid open to the world, and like many ancient cities, the spot where it once was is not known.

But I ask further, Where was Eden? And on this point the scripture is pleased to give us some little information. "*A river went out of Eden to* "*water the garden, and from thence it was parted,* "*and became into four heads. The name of the* "*first is Pison: that is it which encompasseth the* "*whole land of Havilah. And the name of the* "*second is Gihon: the same is it that compasseth* "*the whole land of Ethiopia. And the name of* "*the third river is Hiddekel: that is it which* "*goeth toward the east of Assyria. And the* "*fourth river is Euphrates.*" Gen. ii. 11 to 14. To quote a few words from a modern author, who thus adds, "Concerning the situation and rivers of "the country of Eden, as here described by Moses, "Bishop Patrick, in his commentary upon this "place, gives an account which seems to be not "altogether improbable. The garden lay in the "country of Eden! *out of*, or through which "country, *a river went*, unto the garden *to water* "*it*; (ver. 11.) *and from thence* from the country "of *Eden it parted*, or was divided, *and became* "*into four heads*: namely, two above, before it "entered *Eden*, called *Euphrates* and *Hiddekel*, "or *Tigris*: and two below, after it had passed

"through *Eden*, called *Pison and Gihon*, *which* "*compasseth* or runneth along by, *the whole land* "*of Cush*," ver. 13. See Bp. Watson's Theological Tracts, Vol. I. page 33. I pass on,

3d. Breaking God's law. Whatever marreth God's image, or spoileth his handy works, breaketh also his righteous law, which is set as a sovereign guard and faithful avenger of every wrong done to his most precious and adorable attributes. If the sin of man hath so made havoc of God's workmanship, God hath indeed to complain of damages; of damages done to him by those who ought to have his glory, honor and interest at heart. And what saith the law; 1st. Do this and die. 2d. Pay me what thou owest; and this man not being able to do; 3d. Dust thou art, and to dust shalt thou return: and oh! what a thunderer is the law: it is that voice, "*which they that heard it, entreated* "*that the Word should not be spoken to them any* "*more*," Heb. xii. 19. It is that voice which declareth that "*our God is a consuming fire*," Heb. xii. last verse.

Now in this breaking of God's law, God receiveth or suffereth damage in all his perfections; his justice is robbed of the power to punish; "*Ye* "*shall not surely die*," said the serpent, and man believed it against the oaths and determination of God; his wisdom is dragged down to the level of finite capacities, or theirs exalted, (which is an equal degradation) to his: "*Ye shall be as gods*

"*knowing good and evil.*" Satan dared assert this, and man believed this also. Yea, his very love and mercy are abused to wicked purposes: as if these attributes were to exist winking at sin, to the disesteem and abuse of his awful justice. Oh! the law what a terrible thing to man. May we by faith look to Christ, that the terrors of the law overtake us not.

4th. Disordering God's creation. The first sin of man it hath been observed, spoiled the six days work of a God. Not that it demolished the glory thereof, casting a reproach before its Maker, but that it robbed it of that harmony, order, and beauty which God had given it; the beasts of the field which obediently came to Adam to be named, fly from him and rebel against him, the ground which brought forth fruit, brings forth thorns and thistles. Man whose delight should be in man, as his fellow image of God: abhors that image imperfect, yet restored: wicked Cain slayeth justified Abel: and thus completes the sad catastrophe of crimes, by approaching close to the denial of a God. It is true the murderer Cain was not so hardened in sin, as many murderers since. But this arose, not because the extent or heinousness of his crime was less, but from this cause that God more manifestly communicated himself to his creatures then, than since: yet still Cain had as little desire to bring glory to God, as witness, that instead of confessing his sin in the heinousness thereof, and the justice of the sen-

tence in consequence thereof, he cried out against the chastening hand of God: and in rebellion and despair, "*My punishment is greater than I can* "*bear,*" Gen. iv. 13.

5th. Entertaining God's enemies. "*My son,* "(said Solomon) *if sinners entice thee consent thou* "*not,*" Prov. i, 10. Go not with the multitude to do evil.

Now it may be observed, that harbouring the king's enemies, and entertaining them as friends, is treason in the civil law of every land. It is treason also in the eye of the king of Kings, who commands us not even to touch the unclean thing, that he may receive us. 2 Cor. vi. 17. And this also is a part of that spiritual adultery, which consists in a repudiation or putting away of the Lord of Hosts, from being our husband in the most endearing sense of the word.

6th. and last. In slighting the Lord Jesus. Now this is in direct rebellion to the voice and commandment of God, who with a voice from Heaven declared, "*This is my beloved Son, hear ye him.*" Much time might be spent in shewing the various ways in which whilst in our natural fallen condition, we slight the Lord Jesus; these may be observed, *viz.* in denying his divinity, in slighting the efficacy of his mediatorial offices, the benefit of his sufferings, the merit of his blood, the fruits of his death, the prevalence of his intercession, the importance of his resurrection, and finally the awful-

ness of his last and decisive judgment. On all these subjects contained in these six remarks, and more particularly on those concentrated in the close of the last, let the natural man examine himself and he will see how greatly both God and Christ, yea and also the Holy Spirit have received damage by him.

The third necessity of the Mediator Christ Jesus, is to offer compensation for the injury done, and the damages sustained. If a rigorous compensation had been demanded of all mankind, according to the literal idea of God's holy law, which demands "*Life for life, eye for eye, tooth for "tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, burning for "burning, wound for wound, stripe for stripe,*" as see Exod. xxi. 24. Levit. xxiv. 20. and Deut. xix. 21. with which compare also Matt. v. 38. then vain had been the mediation and intercession of Christ, to rescue fallen man. A rigorous compensation it is true, was offered by Christ, but not in the strictest sense of the word: for the rigorous compensation which the adorable justice of God had a right to require, was that the offender should himself compensate for the injury done in his own person, on pain of suffering eternal death: and such a proceeding though most highly equitable in God, would have damned all his creatures to the pains of hell for ever: and this would have been an actual rigorous compensation. But though the compen-

tion which Christ offered was a rigorous one, yet it was only virtually so, though far transcending that which man could ever make: for what could have been the compensation which man would offer? His own life as forfeited by transgression, his own blood as shed by the just hand of God, and his own body and soul given up, worthily to suffer the pains of hell for ever. And this compensation as it would have precluded merit would have precluded also any hope of salvation. But what better compensation hath Christ offered? He gave his own life a ransom for many, having taken our nature, excepting sin, he suffered his own righteous blood to be shed instead of ours, by the hand of God, as an atonement and peace-offering for us. In his body he died, and descended into hell. And this virtual compensation of Christ for us, goes on the footing of his transcendant and divine merit, introducing to the mind of many a sinner the firmest hope of an everlasting salvation purchased by the merits, death, sufferings, &c. of a divine Saviour; as the holy life, and happy, and sometimes triumphant death of all God's people in all ages, doth abundantly testify.

Now considering these things, is not Christ a door indeed to his sheep, opening to them, 1st. A sense of the injury they have done to God. 2d. Shewing them in what the Godhead hath received damage, and 3d. Shewing them his equitable compensation; thus presenting them to the Father per-

fect and complete through his shed blood and imputed righteousness.

But if Christ is alone able and worthy, to fill, occupy, and bless for our good the way of access to God, so that no one can walk therein, in the participation of merit with him, what must we think of him, who "*entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way,*" but that "*the same is a thief and a robber.*" And what is human merit in whole, or in part; either set up totally against Christ the good shepherd, or mixing with his merit in the affairs of our souls; but a thief and a robber, robbing him of the merits of his blood and of the honor due to his name. Oh! that we may be cleared of all self-righteousness, as well as unrighteousness, that we may come stript of all to him, to be clothed by him, that we may not be found naked.

15th. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit. He that loveth his life, shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world, shall keep it unto life eternal. John xii. 24, 25.

Three things claim attention in the first verse of the two, which it shall be my business briefly to mention, *viz.*

1st. The kingdom of nature presents us with a proof of this. Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone. A corn of wheat

is mentioned here not in contradistinction to any other seed, but as an illustration that others also grow from the same principle: in which it may be noted, that what is intended to grow must be put into the ground—though it carries within itself the germ of life, yet that germ cannot of itself grow up and sprout, except as acted upon by some life-giving power. Observe a seed, however small; we see a prominent part called the sprout, which by experience we know, is the first part susceptible of life. Yet we know that this sprout will not make it live, till it feels the nourishment of the earth penetrating its recesses, by the joint agency of the moisture of the clouds, and of the warmth of the sun. An apt emblem of a Christian. Man contains within himself the germ of life, the Spirit which as to its essence and origin is a spark lighted by the living God. Though man carries within himself the germ of life, as implanted by God, yet that germ cannot grow up and sprout to the glory of God, except as acted upon by the life-giving Spirit of the Son of God. So faint are the traces of a divine origin in the spirit of man by reason of the fall, that their prominency dwindles into an atom, when the eye of flesh views them in comparison with the things of the body which do appear. Yet the Christian man knows by experience, that this germ of life is the first part susceptible of spiritual life; yet he believes not that this germ of life, will burst forth into real existence, action and intelligence,

till it feels the support of that ground in which every regenerate spirit is planted—even in the garden of God; till that support reaches and penetrates the seat of life, by the joint agency of the Sun of Righteousness, and of the dew of the Spirit descending upon it. And except we have experienced, and felt the bitterness of spiritual death through Adam, and feel that we die in him, we can not feel any desire to come to Christ, and must abide alone, dead through trespasses and sins.

2d. Death is the only way to glory. Death is the common lot of all men, and the living should lay it to heart. Its commonness should not lead us to push the thought away; for first its approach is preceded by uncertainty. So that many are suddenly taken out of life, and to all it is as Dr. Young expresses it, "A slow-sudden death." 2d. It is the wages of sins; and a most cursed and bitter, yet deserved fruit of man's transgression. 3d. The death of the body is no remedy for, nor security from the second death: for many who have expired in great agonies of body, are now suffering the pains of hell for ever. Hence death is no meritorious way of gaining ease from endless torments. On the contrary, it seals irrevocably the doom of saints and sinners, holds them as it found them to the great decision of the judgment day. Yet is it the way by which the saints will all be ushered into glory, and a glorious way for all that die in the faith of the Lord Jesus. And is it im-

possible that any can reach glory but through the intervention of death? We will consider the matter, and first considering man before the fall, and for a moment supposing he was never to fall, then I argue he could not see death, seeing death was the wages of sin. But still even then, man was in a state of unglorified perfection; first because he was in a state of probation, and next because he was not a perfect spirit, being compounded of pure spirit, and a heterogenous earthly body. I say unglorified perfection; because I conceive it impossible that Adam could have gone to the world of spirits whilst surrounded with a natural body, and though I conceive that he could not taste death for the reason just mentioned, *viz.* that death is the wages of sin, yet I conceive he must have passed through a change, something similar to that of Elijah's, who ascended up to Heaven in chariots of fire: and who whilst he was exempted from the pains of death, and descended not to the tomb in his natural body, yet suffered his mantle to divide the waters of Jordan, thus acknowledging death his rightful Lord, from whose power he triumphed, he was set free only by the extreme and abundant grace of the Lord his God towards him; but these are some of the secret things that belong to the Lord. 2d. Considering man since the fall. If we read the extent of the curse, as commented upon by Paul, we have these words; "*and so death passed upon all "men, for that all have sinned,*" Rom. v. 12. Hence

all men must taste death. But I just mentioned that Elijah was taken up to Heaven without passing the chambers of death: how can this be accounted for, seeing all were to suffer death, and Elijah lived after the fall of Adam and consequently under the curse of the fall? I answer as I have already accounted for it, *viz.* on the sovereign grace of God put forth in an extraordinary way, to shew that sinners may be saved under every dispensation of his church, consistently with free grace and his sovereign pleasure. But further to illustrate and strengthen this, I take pleasure in quoting from the pious writings of a late celebrated author and minister of the gospel, who thus adds; "Such an one "was Enoch: thus he lived and walked with God; "and thus escaped death that end of all men: *He* "*was not, for God took him.* This is the last "memorable particular of his history. About the "import of the words, we can be at no loss, after "the apostle has explained them; by his being "*translated that he should not see death.* And "what is the instruction which it administers to the "world? Simply this, that a life of faith and ho-"liness is but one remove from glory: that Hea-"ven descended to earth, will quickly raise men "from earth to Heaven: that death either averted, "or overcome and destroyed, will at length open a "passage to perfect union with God and enjoy-"ment of him. We acknowledge no other para-"dise or habitation of the blessed, but that repre-

" sented in scripture, as the place where God gives " the brightest evidences of his gracious presence, " and communicates his glory in full splendor. " That to which Jesus on the cross promised to " conduct the penitent thief. That which Paul " calls the *third* Heaven; and which in other " places of the Bible is denominated HEAVEN, " simply, and by way of excellency. Thither was " Enoch taken; thither also did Elijah 212 years " afterwards mount on a chariot of fire, and the " wings of a whirlwind: and finally thither at length " in placid majesty, ascended the captain of salva- " tion, ' *leading captivity captive.*'

" Thus in each of the great periods of the church, " was exhibited an instance of a man taken up into " Heaven, body and spirit, as a support and encou- " ragement to the hope of believers, of attaining " the same felicity. Enoch before the law was " given; Elijah under the legal economy; and Je- " sus Christ the Saviour of men under the evange- " lical dispensation.

" Enoch, Elijah and Christ, in certain views, can " be compared only with each other; but in all " things HE must have the pre-eminence. By " the power and mercy of God, they were *taken* " up into Heaven; by his own power, he *ascended* " on high; *they* as servants, *he* as the eternal Son " of God. In *them* we have a repeated instance of " bodies glorified without suffering death: *he was* " *dead and is alive again*, and carried to Heaven,

"a body which had been laid in the tomb. In "*them* we have an object of admiration and asto- "nishment; in *him* a pattern for imitation, a Sa- "viour in whom to trust, a ground of hope where- "on to rest. Faith *exempted* them from death: "and faith shall at length *redeem* all the followers "of the Lamb from the power of the grave. "*Enoch* and *Elijah* ascended as solitary indivi- "duals, *Christ* as the first fruits of them that sleep; "and *lifted up*, is drawing an elect world unto "him. *They* were admitted to regions unknown, "and among society untried: *he* only returned to "the place from whence he came." Hunter's Sacred Biography, 5th edit. Vol I. Lect. 6. p. 89. And is it not a comforting thing to think that under the three dispensations of the christian church, God hath furnished a miraculous instance of grace, saving beyond death his chosen servants, in a way typical of the great salvation from the second death, of all who believe upon him.

3d. Christ's death is fruitful in happiness and glory to his people. "*Except a corn of wheat "fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: "but if it die it bringeth forth much fruit.*" The necessity of Christ's death might here be touched upon as the only way in which man can be saved consistently with the divine justice and honor. But happily those who are driven to self-despair of justification by the deeds of the law; are led by the Spirit of God to lay hold on Christ that

they may be justified by faith in his name: I pass it by though not without the firmest faith thereon: and consider the fruits of his death as being the meritorious cause of bringing forth much fruit. A corn of wheat is the figure here made use of, nor is it without a most suitable reference to the Lord Jesus; seeing he is elsewhere spoken of as the bread of life. Now we know that wheat of all other grain is the most in request to make bread, seeing it is of the most nutritious and wholesome quality of any. And this nature Christ took upon himself for the support and comfort of his people. Now herein do the type and the thing typified coincide, *except it die it abideth alone.* The grain of wheat is one, and produceth no ears; Christ also is one and hath no members, but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit. A grain of wheat, fermenting, dying, springeth up, and many grains spring from it, Christ dying in the appointed time saveth many members. Yea he saveth a complete "*body, the church, which* "*is the fulness of him who filleth all in all.*" Ephes. i. 23. But to observe more fully the fruits of his death, they are first primary and then secondary. Under the primary may be observed

1st. Of the eternal election of all his seed. The infinite wisdom of God when in his eternal mind, he planned the making of the world, foresaw its fall: to have prevented which altogether would have destroyed that line of distinction he intended to make between himself and his creatures, by giving them

that absolute perfection, he determined should belong exclusively to himself. Thus angels fell though in a different way from man: for when satan that bright morning star rebelled, he drew only the third part of the stars of Heaven after him: they fell not through him as a covenant head and representative, but as they actually rebelled with him, whilst the rest stood secure to adore that grace that kept them from being thus ensnared in a like manner. But man when he fell, fell in a covenant head Adam, in whose loins all our race were folded up in the eye and purpose of God. But to counteract the imputation of sin and death upon all Adam's race, in consequence of his most wilful transgression, God eternally chose, certain of Adam's race of whom Adam was one, to be saved by the imputation of righteousness and life, through another federal head Christ Jesus.

2d. The stopping the immediate death of Adam for his transgression. The sentence of the law as pronounced by God himself, was, "*In the day "that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die.*" And why, if this sentence is to be taken in the literal sense, was it not in the literal sense instantly executed? Does the justice of God suffer any imputation from the delay of the punishment? No. For observe the sentence began immediately to be executed, in driving man from Eden, dispossessing him of spiritual life, causing the ground speedily to bring forth briars and thorns, and in the various

diseases of body and pains of conscience which soon began to trouble the human frame. Hence the law was in its spirituality cleared from imputation, just as we blame not the reprieve even of a murderer during the king's royal pleasure, when that reprieve is only the delay of a just sentence, either for the purpose of a more signal execution of justice, or to make way for pardon, consistently with the dignity and honor of the law. Now thus the sentence of death was prevented from being literally put in execution against man on the spot, to make way for divine mercy, in a manner suitable to divine justice. The stroke was suspended that Christ the Mediator might come down: to convince Adam of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment; of sin, by arguing with him the nature and extent of his crime, and making him confess by word of mouth his fatal fall: of righteousness, by stripping him of the false badges, and unprofitable useless coverings of his shame, and clothing him in the skins of a slain beast, an apt declaration, that without shedding of blood there is no remission, and a striking type of the shedding of Christ's own blood in due time for the sins of his people: of judgment; by rehearsing the awful sentence against the seducing serpent, and his whole seed, which though it should bruise the woman's seed, though put into Christ, should receive a mortal bruise on his head, by the emphatic seed of the woman, Christ himself; and whilst this was a notable display of God's love and mercy

through the Mediator, it would also convince Adam of that judgment which he deserved, which through the offered mediation of Christ was averted from the chosen seed of the woman, and for ever settled on the seed of the serpent; and oh! how fatal must it have been for Adam, (we say not for the human race, seeing that none were yet born of him) had the sentence gone out, before the intervention of a Mediator could have given effectual assistance to his fallen soul.

3d. The promising the seed of the woman.

The purposed death of Christ for fallen man, which was typified to Adam and Eve so soon after the fall, in the victims slain, in whose skins they were clothed, was productive instantly of this good effect, that it drew a line of distinction between the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent. And hence the æra of the fall presents to our view, the blessed exhibition of discriminating grace beaming forth from God, who by the sovereign exertion of his will, "*Will be gracious* (as he himself de-"clared) *to whom I will be gracious, and will* "*shew mercy on whom I will shew mercy,*" Exod. xxxiii. 19. From the first period, God put a marked difference between the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent, not because there was any natural or moral difference, seeing both were descendants of Adam, and both equally under the curse of the fall: but because he had determined to shew that he had put the seed of the woman

into Christ, who himself should be born of a virgin, that thus they might visibly be objects of his special favor. And here it may be observed, that whilst Christ promised the seed of the woman, or a seed to the woman, he promised himself; and that, 1st. In his human nature, as being emphatically "*her seed*," Gen. iii. 15. and 2d. In his mediatorial offices; "*thou shalt bruise his heel*," ver. 15. But more particularly he promised a seed to be chosen out of all nations, and in due time gathered from all quarters of the globe, who should spring from the woman in a natural relation; his own spiritual relation to the woman by taking our nature being the cause of the choice of them; for when Eve became through Christ taking her for his spiritual spouse, his only beloved and chosen spouse, then all the fruits of that mystical and spiritual union, became both the seed of the woman and the seed of Christ, the chosen seed of a chosen virgin, betrothed unto Christ for ever and ever. And this union procured;

4th. The pardon and acceptance of all the seed of the woman.

Though the righteous are the seed of the woman Eve, the mother of all the living in a spiritual sense, yet they are born in sin, because she herself sinned, and because they are in common with the seed of the serpent, federally children of her earthly husband Adam; thus they pass through the curse to the blessing, and must bitterly feel their fall in the *first* Adam, before they rise in Christ. Their pos-

session then of the blessing, ariseth from the union of Christ to the spiritual Eve, whereby a grant of pardon and acceptance is soon bestowed upon her spiritual children. Observe this visible in the two first children of our first parents, one of whom was the seed of the serpent, and the other the seed of the woman. Observe the fruits of this, visible in the conduct they soon adopted, "*Cain* (the first "born) *brought of the fruit of the ground, an* "*offering unto the Lord. And Abel, he also* "*brought of the firstlings of his flock, and of the* "*fat thereof. And the Lord had respect unto* "*Abel, and to his offerings. But unto Cain, and* "*to his offering he had not respect. And Cain* "*talked with Abel his brother: and it came to* "*pass when they were in the field, that Cain rose* "*up against Abel his brother, and slew him,*" Gen. iv. 3, 4, 5 and 8. And see how God avengeth the murder of Abel. "*What hast thou done?* "*the voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me* "*from the ground. And now art thou cursed* "*from the earth, which hath opened her mouth to* "*receive thy brother's blood from thy hand.* "*When thou tillest the ground, it shall not hence-* "*forth yield unto thee her strength. A fugitive* "*and a vagabond shalt thou be in the earth,*" Gen. iv. 10, 11, 12.

But to speak more of that pardon and acceptance which the seed of the woman enjoy; this pardon is

for ever sealed to them in the courts above. Not that the seed of the woman are eternally justified in their sins, but above their sins: for this spiritual seed, before they are brought by regeneration and effectual calling, are as much deserving of the wrath of God as the seed of the serpent, and often more sensibly feel God's displeasure in this present world. But their pardon runs thus: that they shall be made sensible in God's own time of their lost and ruined state, of the heinousness of their sins, of the terrors of the law, and of the awful nature and sad effects (if grace had intervened not) of sinning against God; of the justice of God's sentence, though he should condemn them, yet of the riches of his grace, in accepting them through the beloved. This brings them, through the Spirit, humbly to sue for pardon through the blood of the cross: and to ask every mercy through their covenant head, their kinsman Redeemer, the Lord Jesus Christ: and then as to their acceptance: the woman's seed are made to know and feel their interest in Christ; not that all feel it alike, for many scarcely feel it at all; yet the most trembling are tremblingly alive to their lost condition out of Christ: and when they can scarcely hope are resolved if they perish to perish in praise at God's footstool. Nor does this encourage the enthusiasm of those who think they have sufficient love to God to praise him for ever, if they were for ever doomed to perish in the flames of

hell: not considering that their presence in torment, would prove they had been enemies at heart to him; for God could not according to his oath and purpose in Christ Jesus, doom to hell any who delighted in his ways, revered his name and walked in his truth. Thus far as to the primary effects of Christ's death; to speak of the secondary, on their application to every believer, they are these;

1st. The effectual calling of the seed of the woman. A call to salvation is the only way of salvation, as man hath no willingness to come to be saved. Nor is an invitation all that is necessary, seeing man with an unrenewed heart is obstinately bent on refusing mere offers of mercy. A call, expressly personally, irresistibly and effectually is necessary; which whilst it breaks the stubborn heart into ten thousand pieces, makes it willing in the day of God's power; and draws it by that "*love,*" which "*is strong as death,*" Solomon's Song viii. 6. To consider these—a call expressly, "*Awake "thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and "Christ shall give thee light,*" Ephes. v. 14. where particular characters are mentioned, even those who sleep on carelessly in their sins. A call personally, "*Arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the glory "of the Lord is risen upon thee,*" Isaiah lx. 1. and to instance particular characters; behold Saul of Tarsus, met by Christ himself whilst going to persecute his church, with this language, "*Saul, Saul,*

"*Why persecutest thou me. And the Lord said unto me, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest. Arise and go into Damascus; and there it shall be told thee of all things which are appointed for thee to do.*" And presently Ananias followeth up this language, "*Brother Saul, receive thy sight. The God of our fathers hath chosen thee, that thou shouldest know his will, and see that just one and shouldst hear the voice of his mouth,*" Acts xxii. 7, 8, 10, 13 and 14.

A call irresistibly: who can say to the Lord what doeth thou? who can stay the work of his hands, with a mighty (yea an Almighty hand) and a stretched out arm, he brought out Israel from Egypt. Whilst Lot, lingered in Sodom, the angel of the covenant "*Laid hold upon his hand, and upon the hand of his wife, and upon the hand of his two daughters, the Lord being merciful unto him,*" Gen. xix. 16. Lastly, it is a call effectually. "*All that the Father giveth me shall come unto me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.*" Thus a man's salvation is put out of his own power; not that he may not be saved; but that his own power being insufficient, he may be "*kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation,*" 1 Pet. i. 5. and those whom he hath thus effectually called, shall be kept to the end in the faith of the gospel. 1st. Because those whom he loves he loves to the end: which is beautifully recorded by the beloved disciple, just before

Christ manifested his exceeding love in dying for his people. See John xiii. 1. And as this love is from everlasting, so also it is for everlasting: 2nd. Because he will confirm them to the end, and that for this purpose, that being justified by his blood, they may also be sanctified by his righteousness, that he may present them *blameless* before the Father in his own day, 1 Cor. i. 8. 3d. Because for this purpose, he will himself vouchsafe to be with him, in his mediatorial offices, and in the power of his Spirit to the end. Matt. xxviii. 20. Oh blessed fruits of Christ's most accursed and shameful death: blessed to all his people, whom he hath called with an high, holy, effectual and everlasting calling.

Another blessed fruit of Christ's death is:

2d. Their regeneration in consequence of their effectual calling.

We are called with a high calling, to denote its divine and supernatural origin, and what we are called from, as well as what we are called to. We are called with a holy calling, to denote the holiness of heart, life, and conversation, which become God's people. Man sees not the necessity of regeneration, till he beholds Christ holding forth, and bestowing spiritual life. He knows not the nature of it till Christ hath applied the principle and energy thereof on his soul, by the work of his Spirit; nor knows the end and intent of it, till Christ is already *formed* in him the hope of eternal

glory. And then when the new principle breaks on his soul; he marvels at the change.

Doth nature awake to counteract it? Nature cannot root out grace. Grace implanted produceth grace; which must ripen to eternal life, in spite of all the strugglings, resistance, lothings, and most obstinate contention of nature, aided by all the snares of the world, and the malice and subtilty of the devil.

But 3d. Repentance springing from regeneration is the fruit of Christ's death for his people.

The more and the longer the man hath struggled against grace, the more must he be led to repent of the same. This is a fruit of Christ's death, and the blessed privilege of the seed of the woman. There is a certain sense in which the seed of the serpent, struggle and strive, resist and overcome grace. But this is not irresistible and saving grace, but common grace such as is given to all men, to obey or not, (in natural strength), the dealings of God's providence towards them. Were saving grace applied to them, they could not resist it; but the withholding of it from them, proves they are chosen to final reprobation, left to resist holiness and grieve the Spirit, without having received the grace of repentance, and without having either will or power given of God to lay hold of everlasting life. And after Christ had died for his people, he was "*Exalted as a prince and a Saviour, to give*

"*repentance unto Israel and forgiveness of sins,*" Acts v. 31.

4th. Faith is another fruit of Christ's death. "*Faith,* (for we cannot better define it than the "scripture hath done), *is the substance of things* "*hoped for, the evidence of things not seen,*" Heb. xi. 1. It is the substance of things hoped for. Now what doth man hope for as considering that he is endued with eternal life, but the substance or certainty of a happy eternity. Now Christ "*hath* "*brought life and immortality to light through* "*the gospel,*" 2 Tim. i. 10. A gospel whose truth he sealed when he expired on the tree, when those around, yea even a Roman centurion, employed with a band of soldiers to attend his crucifixion, were inwardly moved to cry out, "*Truly, this man was* "*the Son of God,*" Mark xv. 39. It is the evidence of things not seen. We see not the glories that shall be revealed to God's people. Yea we cannot form any adequate idea of their purity, sublimity, and unalloyed pleasure; but our faith believes them, lays hold upon them as sure, eyes them spiritually as if close at hand, and so feasts upon them in foretaste, as often gives the soul such ardor of love and draws it up so near Heaven, that when we descend from the mount of vision, to the valley of humiliation in flesh and blood, we often know not how to suppress the disappointment, at the thought that we must tarry a little longer here below. Yet as faith may be exercised to as much

and often more advantage in the valley, than on the mountain, it becomes us to use it when the ardor of our love is thus disappointed, and we feel we still carry about with us a body of sin and death wherever we go. Now Christ is the author and finisher of our faith, and that principally by leading us to the scenes of his humiliation and suffering whilst here below. "*Looking* (says Paul) *to Je-* "*sus the author and finisher of our faith, who for* "*the joy that was set before him, endured the* "*cross, despising the shame, and is set down at* "*the right hand of the throne of God,*" Heb. xii. 2.

5th. Holiness is another fruit of Christ's death.

Christ by his death purchased all the graces of his Holy Spirit, that they might be implanted by that Spirit in the soul of man. The Spirit of holiness is one, and is itself a complication and combined essence of all graces; for it presupposes faith on Christ as the only ground of acceptable holiness,—repentance as the only state of heart, in which faith is necessary, or holiness desirable to the soul,—love as the exciting cause, which alone can bind a man to God, the love of God shed abroad in his heart; leading him to believe that holiness here is necessary for happiness for ever,—and obedience as the comfortable exercise of all graces, hastening to fulfil his just and righteous commandments. Hence holiness in heart, is the acme of perfection in a Christian here below, which can only be

equalled in degree, comfort and duration, by the possession of the last fruit of Christ's death, *viz.*

The possession of eternal life. Now God the Father hath so willed, that all his chosen shall repossess his blessed image for ever and ever, in those mansions which Christ hath prepared for them: "*And this* (says Christ) *is the will of him that sent* "*me, that every one which seeth the Son, and be-* "*lieveth on him, may have everlasting life; and I* "*will raise him up at the last day,*" John vi. 40. Mark the expression: eternal life is the will of the Father, but the gift of the Son. It is Christ who by his divine power raiseth up his people at the last day. He willingly laid down his life for them. He took it up again when the salvation of his people was sealed and secured through his blood. And he set forth his own resurrection, as a ground that they should rise to glory also. Now as the eternal life which Christ hath to give to his people, consisteth in the most blessed enjoyment of, delight in, and communion with God for ever; so Adam had forfeited this for himself and all his descendants by his one fatal transgression. If given then to him or any of his descendants, it is by an act of free grace; in a way consistent with all God's most adorable attributes, and more particularly with his justice. But justice requires the punishment of sin in a way suited to its dreadful nature and consequences. Now sin is an infinite evil against infinite good; and can only be expiated by an infinite atonement. But all

created beings not excepting angels, are finite; hence a person in the Godhead, could alone offer infinite satisfaction for an infinite offence, and this hath Christ offered. Behold then, the beauty, and God-honoring, yea sinner-saving tendency of justification by the righteousness of Christ. By his righteousness he confessed, the honor of the Godhead was injured through the sin of man; by his righteousness he confessed that man deserved eternal death; by his righteousness he divulged to his divine fellows, (to speak in the very language of scripture, see Zech. xiii. 7.) a plan of his own glorious contrivance, in which God might be just, and the justifier of those who should believe on himself in all ages; by his righteousness, he submitted without a murmur to the stroke of death, and finished what the bowels of his tender mercy intended; by his righteousness he will sit at the last, decreeing a righteous sentence on all mankind, condemning his enemies to the flames of hell for ever, but giving life eternal and all its attendant blessings to all the chosen of God, "*who are the called according to his purpose,*" Rom. viii. 28.

16th. Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his Lord; neither he that is sent, is greater than he that sent him. John xiii. 16.

Humility is the ground work of religion, not the foundation; for Christ is the foundation. Humility is the place of contest in which a christian fights the battles of the Lord. Here to speak in the

allegorical language of a pious divine, Christian met the foul fiend Apollyon, and fought with him a most dreadful battle in which he gained the victory, through the strength of him who is with his people in every time of need. See Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress, Scot's edit. page 65.

Humility is that state of heart, in which alone we are fitted either to acknowledge our sins, sue for mercy, or to receive mercy in the appointed way. It is a virtue possessed not at all by the men of the world, in a scripture sense, (and in no other sense is it desirable, seeing the word of God condemns a voluntary humility, as a proof we are beguiled by the servants of the devil. See Coloss. ii. 18.) and it is too little possessed (as God's people daily lament) by themselves.

What do the men of the world know of it? Do they see the exceeding sinfulness of sin, as committed against a holy and just God? Do they consider themselves the subjects, by nature, of God's righteous indignation on account of it? It is true, natural conscience hath sometimes so galled the men of the world, that they have carried as it were a hell within themselves: the pangs of remorse and sorrow have seized them; but these feelings have but produced the horrid din of blasphemy against God, and not the meltings of godly sorrow on account of transgression. And here I freely confess these horrors were once known by myself. Ensnared, willingly and wilfully ensnared, by those odious women, whose

"*House is the way to hell, going down to the* "*chambers of death,*" Prov. vii. 27. I sought the beastly gratification of my animal passions. I wandered in a fever of body and mind, which nothing allayed but the gratification of my burning lust, and which that allayed only for a short season, and only to rekindle with a hotter fire. It pleased God that "*a dart,*" (the bitter attendant and disease of illicit amours) should "*strike through my liver,*" and lay me the victim of severe pain. I cursed the filthy object who contaminated my blood, I cursed my lust that rushed through known and dreaded consequences, to a momentary gratification, I cursed that accusing angel and foe of man who, fallen himself from the bright glory of a morning star in the kingdom of Heaven, Isaiah xiv. 12. is ever busy to plunge man in sin; and then in the terrors of the law, to bury and smother within them the rising hope of mercy. I cursed my God himself as the author of my sin, considering most blasphemously, that because he had given me passions, he only could be blamed for my base use and sinful indulgence of them.

I wandered in the day time far from the haunts of men, I retired from the eye of man to the silent couch, to vent more deliberate and studied imprecations in the dark and silent hour. Trusting in my strength, I promised reformation, without expressing to God, the smallest contrition and repentance of heart, and I thus remained till *he* was pleased to

restore me to bodily health, when *I* was pleased wickedly to restore myself again to the commission of sins.

But my race in fornication was short, though heartily wicked. God be praised for the riches of his grace, who hath by faith led me to Christ, to wash away so foul a stain. May this speak awfully and plainly to my youthful readers, that they may stop if not totally overborn by sin before they commit it, and reflect how they may be hurried to the like awful fall with myself. To return, doth natural conscience alarmed, bring men to evangelical repentance? On the contrary, many rage like devils on this earth, under a sense of sin, yet like devils, make their hearts as stout as they can against the Lord, and call in unbelief, rebellion and the most refined obduracy to their aid, to fight against the Lord. But who must prevail in this battle? If they prevail, and prosper as they wickedly desire in this world, death and ruin seize them in the next. If God prevail, the scene must be changed, their plan must be altered, his grace must and will conquer till it reign down all their sins. And then—what? this enemy must be subdued; this blasphemy must be ended. Sorrow must begin—a godly sorrow for horrid transgressions—faith must come, a lively faith on Jesus—regeneration and its fruits must be matured, a new birth of the Spirit, begetting an heir of the kingdom of Heaven.

But further, this humility is too little possessed by the children of God, for first they consider not sufficiently, how liable they are to fall away.

If the Christian looks only to Christ, he hath no reason to fear falling away: for whom Christ loveth he loveth to the end; and the wicked heart of a man born of God, cannot draw him to final perdition, for Christ will provide that grace, by which the soul thus born of him, shall be enabled finally to overcome the most wicked movements of his most wicked heart. But it behoves a Christian to look to himself to see what he is, a frail dependant ungodly creature in himself at best; to see what he was, a most wicked hell-deserving wretch, by nature the child of wrath even as others: to see what he will be, by God's grace an heir of Heaven; to see what he would be without that grace, a ruined miserable creature still.—Paul thus remembers his Corinthian brethren; "*Be not deceived; neither fornicators, "nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor "abusers of themselves with mankind. Nor thieves, "nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor "extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. "And such were some of you,*" 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10, 11. He says not all of you, lest all should not be so excessively vile, and be offended at him; he says some of you: that all who had been so, might remember their condition, to the praise of that grace, which continued to preserve them from their former sins.

2d. They consider not sufficiently how low they had fallen before the grace of God raised them up. Considering all mankind as the children of Adam, and fallen even in his loins, (from his being their federal head) by original transgression, all the elect are lost and dead with the world at large in trespasses and sins. Yet herein they differ from the rest of the world, though fallen from grace, and lost as having wandered from the sheepfold of God. Yet they are not fallen from out of the arms of God's love and mercy; "*underneath*" them "*are the ever-*"*lasting arms,*" Deut. xxxiii. 27. and though they have fallen so as to merit the flames of hell for ever, yet they are not so fallen as they shall endure them: in proof of which see Christ after his meritorious death descending into hell, thus conquering satan on his own ground, and foiling him in all his attempts, to draw God's chosen though fallen creatures to that place of torment. But to prove further, how far even God's children had fallen, before God in Christ interposed to raise them up, we may notice the language of the apostle Paul, following that just before quoted, where having stated the different characters which shall not enter the kingdom of God, he speaks thus of the elect, "*And such* "*were some of you; but ye are washed, but ye are* "*sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the* "*Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God,*" 1 Cor. vi. 11. The same apostle elsewhere draws as humiliating a picture of the state of the elect, before their

recovery by the grace of the gospel. "*And you* "(says he) *hath he quickened, who were dead in* "*trespasses and sins; wherein in time past ye* "*walked according to the course of this world,* "*according to the prince of the power of the air,* "*the Spirit which now worketh in the children of* "*disobedience; among whom also we also had our* "*conversation in times past, in the lusts of our* "*flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh, and of the* "*mind, and were by nature the children of wrath,* "*even as others,*" Ephes. ii. 1 to 3.

3d. We may notice, that the want of a proper degree of humility is often observable in God's people, in the reluctance and slowness with which they embrace gospel doctrines. At first, they are often slow of heart to believe the heinousness of their transgressions in the sight of God: the extent of this it is true depends greatly on the previous characters; some of God's people are often chosen from the most openly wicked and profane: these are soon struck with compunction of spirit, but as these are less humble in receiving the doctrine of the cross, than in receiving that of original and actual transgression, I pass them by for a few moments, and observe some are chosen from a fair shew in the flesh, from the lurking places of unsanctified morality, from the holds of self-righteousness, set up as an accursed idol in their hearts. Now when the stirrings of grace in these make them look within, they stir against them. 'What

'(say they) and are our faults and failings to be ac-
'counted so heinous in the sight of God, and to be
'lamented so bitterly in our own souls? are we to
'be classed with the openly immoral, and avowedly
'profane? to be thought no better of, in the sight
'of God, and to be as heinous in our own eyes?
'Did *our* sins help to crucify the Lord of life and
'glory. Must he of necessity have died to save
'man, if all the world were no worse than we? are
'we to count all but loss and dross and dung, for
'the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus?
'He himself owns he came not to call the righte-
'ous, but sinners to repentance. Must *our* righte-
'ousness stand for nothing? Must we be reckoned
'as the vilest of the vile; stand condemned as law-
'breakers and be treated with in a way of mercy,
'only as lost and condemned rebels?' Yet so it is. The covering of self-righteousness and hypocritical morality, must be torn from the body of all God's people, though it be the wounding of the flesh, opening many a sore. Did Christ submit to shame for us? and must not we take to ourselves shame and confusion of face, which belongeth unto us to this very day. Dan. ix. 7. And for this very thing is the righteousness of Christ held out unto us, that contrasting his spotless robe, with our most paltry, and in regard to justification most filthy performances, we may be led to confess that we with all the world are become guilty before God.

And 2d. God's people are often slow of heart to

look to Christ and believe his promises. The most wicked and profane are generally, when brought to a right knowledge of themselves, the most deeply wounded with compunction of spirit on account of sin; they know those acute feelings which in scripture are compared to the wormwood and the gall: yet this is at best but half the cure; looking unto Jesus, is the only remedy for a wounded spirit and a guilty soul. Yet how long doth the mind of God's chosen often lay exposed to the terrors of the law, to the pangs of a wounded conscience, struggling in its own strength, and endeavouring to bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Oh how dishonoring is this to the cause of Christ, and how provoking to the majesty of Heaven, to see those whom Christ died to redeem, and whom for this end he had begun to convince of sin, endeavouring under the smart to shun the remedy; under the burden shunning that cross, at whose feet alone it can drop off from their backs: for so fast doth the burden of sin stick to the human frame, that nothing but a faith's view of the cross, and of our crucified Lord bleeding thereon, can ease us of the intolerable load, and make us go easily all our days. Now in these instances is the want of humility visible in God's people: I say nothing of the wicked, for they are puffed up with pride: their ways are right in their own eyes, and their hearts are harder than the nether millstone.—Here even the elect stumble in the ground work of their religious career, some slighting their convic-

tions of sin, others slighting their sovereign cure. Will any say in reading these things, "*Who then "can be saved?*" Our Lord's disciples in the days of his flesh, asked him this question; and they received this comforting and heart cheering answer; "*With men this is impossible; but with God all "things are possible,*" Matt. xix. 25, 26. The elect must be saved by conquering these. They will not be suffered to die dishonoring their Lord. Some of them by pleasing, and others by painful experience, must be led to the foot of the cross. Christ in his glory will dazzle some, as he did that chosen vessel, Paul: afflictions must break down the proud spirits of others, till they can confess that the cross is in every dispensation, which cast into the cup, like the tree in the waters of Marah, by the hands of Moses, can make their bitter sweet. See Exod. xv. 25. On which it may be observed, that the cup of sorrow for sin either in a way of repentance, or in seeking pardon, acceptance, and justification before God, must remain bitter to him that tastes it, till the tree of God's own providing is cast in, which tree is the cross of Christ Jesus our Lord.

17th. Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that receiveth whomsoever I send, receiveth me; and he that receiveth me, receiveth him that sent me. John xiii. 20.

A godly sorrow for sin is the gift of God by his Holy Spirit which worketh effectually in the hearts

of his elect, by that sorrow which needeth not be repented of. But how shall Christ be known as the balm of gilead, the physician of souls? We say by his word. But how shall his word be known, seeing all possess not a copy of his word: I mean the gospel, and few have that word written on the tablets of their hearts? I answer by the preaching thereof. Thus says St. Paul, "*Whosoever shall "call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.*" But a great difficulty rises in the mind of the apostle, which that it may neither dishonor God's name among men, or be detrimental to the peace of men having the fear of God, he first states, and then removes. "*How then,* (he adds to state the "difficulty) *shall they call on him, in whom they "have not believed? and how shall they believe "in him of whom they have not heard? and how "shall they hear without a preacher? And how "shall they preach, except they be sent?*" But there are those who are sent to preach the gospel; their situation is honorable, their post important, and an adequate success is promised to their labors; and thus the apostle sums up all, and removes the difficulty; "*As it is written,*" (appealing to the testimony of ancient scripture as the standard of truth), "*how beautiful are the feet of "them that preach the gospel of peace and bring "glad tidings of good things,*" Rom. x. 13 to 15.

The ministry of the gospel is an honorable employment, for those who are exercised therein:

they are the ambassadors of Christ, who are sent to declare to the world, the terms of peace on which God will be reconciled to his chosen.

If we honor the master, we are to honor those of his household; seeing they are engaged in the service of the master, and should have their eye fixed on his honor and glory. But two things may be observed under the passage just quoted, 1st. Christ is honored in the reception of his ministers, and 2d. God the Father, is honored in the reception of Christ.

1st. Christ is honored in the reception of his ministers. The ministry of the gospel is admirably calculated, in the hands of the Spirit, to lead God's people to the knowledge of, and reception of Christ, through the knowledge of, and confession of their own sins. The aim of ministers of the gospel should be to preach Christ crucified, but as this must be done by various steps and degrees, we may observe a few particulars in which, even above the rest, God's people should listen to the ministers of the gospel. And first, they should listen attentively to the thunder and curses of a broken law, set forth in all its holy requirements against their lost and ruined souls. Though Christ must be preached above the law, yet the law must be preached to bring us to Christ. That soul will not come willingly to a Saviour, who is unconvinced of his need of the same. Pay me that thou owest, is the thunder of the law against

the sinner, taking him at the same time by the throat, to shew the impossibility to escape alive without a ransom: shall the minister say we owe nothing? On the contrary, his language must be, we owe an infinite obedience to a just, holy, yet broken law, an obedience which we never can pay, but which the law incessantly requires of us. Having sinned, we owe a forfeited life to that same holy law, whose preceptive authority hath been broken, subjecting the breaker, to temporal, spiritual and eternal death. And what is the consequence of these things? is the law's force suspended that it cannot execute the threatened vengeance? No, for behold, "*Now also the axe is* "*laid unto the root of the trees; therefore every* "*tree which bringeth not forth good fruit, is hewn* "*down, and cast into the fire,*" Matt. iii. 10. Is the sentence reversed that it should not be executed? No. Christ himself hath borne the sentence for his chosen people, and by his intercession for them, doth continually obtain their pardon from God's hand; whilst seeing the unfruitfulness of his Father's enemies, he will himself acquiesce in the Father's sentence and say, "*Cut it down, why cumbereth* "*it the ground.*" Above all, is the lasting nature of the sentence against God's enemies reversed? No. For Christ himself declares; "*He that is unjust,* "*let him be unjust still; and he which is filthy, let* "*him be filthy still.*"—And so true is this, that it

is added, " *If any man shall take away from the* " *words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take* " *away his part from the book of life, and out of* " *the holy city, and from the things which are* " *written in this book,*" Rev. xxii. 11. 19.

Such is the substance of the ministration of the law which it behoveth ministers to lay before the people, and which it behoveth God's people to receive at their ministers hands, to the end that they may be convinced of sin and despair of salvation by the deeds of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh living be justified.

But far be it from the minister to stop here, or God's people either; lest they be driven to despair for mercy: for observe, Christ is not in all this—nay if this were all Christ would be driven out, and there would be no hope of obtaining remission of sins. Observe then, 2dly. God's people are called upon to listen to the sweet sound of gospel peace shewing Christ the ransom and deliverer of his people. " *Christ,* (says Paul) *is* " *the end of law for righteousness to every one* " *that believeth,*" Rom. x. 4. and so says every minister of the Spirit. To the wounded conscience, wounded deeply under a sense of sin, justification by faith without the deeds of the law, is set forth where no pre-requisite is wanted, to give God's people a hope of mercy, save the bringing of a wounded spirit, wounded by a touch from the Spirit of God, of a conscience loaded and burdened with sin, of a

heart confessed to be the seat of all iniquity, to lay them at the foot of Christ's cross, to melt in sorrow there. Oh! may God's people indeed believe these things. May they see the light of these earthen vessels, lightened by the Spirit of God, and bearing the heavenly treasure, such as by the sound of the trumpet made the walls of proud Jericho fall down, and such as joined with the gospel trumpet make the hearts of sinners fall down, at the mention of the name of the Lord of Hosts. Now in these things ministers are to be heard patiently and to profit, that honor may be ascribed to their Lord.

Now if any man preach another gospel what shall we say? shall we follow him, and believe his report? No, for says St. Paul "*But though we,* "*or an angel from Heaven, preach any other* "*gospel unto you, than that which we have preached* "*unto you, let him be accursed. As we said be-* "*fore, so say I now again, If any man preach* "*any other gospel unto you, than that ye have* "*received, let him be accursed,*" Gal. i. 8, 9. If we consult the context and particularly the next chapter, we shall find that Paul had preached, as a main point in the doctrines of his gospel, justification by faith without the deeds of the law; nor "*Gave* (he) *place by subjection, no not for an* "*hour,*" to those "*false brethren, who came in* "*privily to spy out our liberty,* (says he) *which we* "*have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us*

"*into bondage,*" Gal. ii. 4, 5. Hence Christ is honored in the reception of those who preach justification by faith, without the deeds of the law to the exclusion of all who preach any other gospel. And to preach any other is a proof of the want of regard and love to Christ, and "*If any man love "not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathe-"ma, Maranatha,*" 1 Cor. xvi. 22.

But we allow not the absolute perfection of saints here below, for the church of Christ is still in its wilderness and militant state. Their love is not yet perfect toward their Lord, and of God's chosen church, the beloved disciple and apostle John says, "*If we say that we have no sin we de-"ceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us,*" 1 John i. 8. Hence 3dly. God's people should bear with and endeavour to profit by the admonitions of God's ministers, warning them of their breaches of duty—of their frailty and liableness to sin, from which they are kept only by the power of God—of the imperfection of their faith, love, and all graces, and of the continual wandering of their hearts from the only true source of lasting bliss. And here a minister hath much to do: where mildness bids him forbear, the honor of God bids him speak. God's people under his charge, must be corrected and admonished for known sins, yea more, he must try to get at the fountain of iniquity within them, that by so preaching, that their secret sins may not be quiet

in secret, but rise up and stare them in the face, that so the streams thereof may be stopped and cleansed from pollution. A few particulars may be noted, in which ministers may, and ought often to admonish God's people. As 1st. That they give a stated and constant attendance on the ministry of the word, "*Not forsaking the assembling of our-*"*selves together, as the manner of some is,*" Heb. x. 25. 2d. That they give a *devout* attendance on the same—that they come into the House of God, with a solemn awe and reverence of that God, who filleth his house with his presence.

The earthly tabernacles of God's worship, are more honored by God's presence, than even the private retirements of the devout Christian; for "*The Lord loveth the gates of Zion, more than all* "*the dwellings of Jacob,*" Psalm lxxxvii. 2. And we may adopt the language of the pious patriarch Jacob, "*How dreadful is this place! this is none* "*other but the House of God, and this is the gate* "*of Heaven,*" Gen. xxviii. 17. And 3d. God's ministers may often admonish their people to apply themselves diligently to private prayer and self-examination, that hereby they may know whether the ministry of the gospel is blessed unto them.

And thus St. Paul exhorted his hearers; *In* "*every thing by prayer and supplication with* "*thanksgiving, let your requests be made known* "*unto God,*" Phil. iv. 6. and again, "*Examine*

"*yourselves whether ye be in the faith; prove your* "*own selves; know ye not your own selves, how that* "*Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates,*" 2 Cor. xiii. 5. I speak not these things to admonish any minister of his duty, for I am not a teacher of God's teachers. Those whom the Holy Spirit hath put into the ministry, are well instructed in the duties of their calling. I rather speak these things, that my fellow lay-men may have clear, sound scriptural views of the arduous nature of the ministry, and may be filled with affection, and all due obedience towards their pastors, remembering the kind admonition which Paul hath given to pastors and people; to the latter, "*We beseech you, bre-* "*thren, to know them which labor among you,* "*and are over you in the Lord, and admonish* "*you; and to esteem them very highly in love* "*for their works sake;*" and to the former, "*Now* "*we exhort you, brethren, warn them that are un-* "*ruly, comfort the feeble-minded, support the* "*weak, be patient towards all men,*" 1 Thess. v. 12, 13 and 14. But I must briefly observe, 2dly. That God the Father is honored in the reception of Christ, as Christ hath himself said, "*He that re-* "*ceiveth me, receiveth him that sent me.*"

Many have argued it as a proof of Christ's humility, that he gives more honor to God the Father than he takes to himself. But why have they complimented him thus? Because they considered it indeed a proof of extraordinary humility? Nay ra-

ther, but because they dared from this to deny the Essential Divinity of our adorable Lord. If Christ were not a divine character, little praise would be due to his humility; for many men of probity and virtue, possess that sterling honesty and ingenuousness of heart, that they can by no means stand easy on the pinnacle of another's greatness: and if he be a divine character, then how shall we account for this? Not surely as a denial of divinity, but as a declaration, that in his mediatorial and human natures *only*, and *not* in his divine, he is inferior to the Father as to any degree of divinity. The humility of Christ is voluntary, but with it, is connected the greatest good; yea without it no good can accrue to man; did he condescend to humble himself to the dignity of a man? it was to raise us to the enjoyments and privileges of the Sons of God. Did he submit to sorrow, punishment, and pain; to desertion from men, from angels, and from God? It was to prove that we deserved all these, yet that he suffered them instead of his people. But what doth the Father say of his Son? "*When he bringeth in the first* "*begotten into the world, he saith, And let the* "*angels of God worship him,*" Heb. i. 6. Is this a mere *let*, a mere suffer this to be so, if angels will be willing to pay the homage? Nay—for lo, it is spoken in the imperative mood; a sovereign commandment couched indeed in terms of mildness and love, because those bright spirits delight to adore the Lord Christ, and execute his commission

among the various orders of his creatures. Now we know of no intermediate creatures, between angels and the great God. If then angels think it not beneath their dignity to bow before Christ, to cover their faces with their wings as they approach his throne, and to "*Sing the song of Moses the servant* "*of God,*" (that eminent type of Christ) "*and the* "*song of the Lamb, saying, great and marvellous* "*are thy works, Lord God almighty; just and* "*true are thy ways, thou King of saints.*" Rev. xv. 3. Shall God's people, inferior in dignity to Christ, refuse to pay due homage to their king? It is true, fallen angels rebelled against Christ, and rebelling fell; but will his people chuse the part, the lot, the rebellion, the punishment, the rage, the torment of devils and damned spirits, in preference to the glorious liberty of adoring Christ Jesus, and worshipping eternally before his throne?

Now if God said to the bright spirits above, let all the angels worship him; what saith he to man? Doth he say, hate him; persecute him; reject him, crucify him? Nay, rather, "*This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him.*" Matt. xvii. 5. and for substance, Mark ix. 7. And why did God the Father claim such honour to be paid to Christ? first, because he poured upon Christ the unction of the spirit, for "*Lo! the heavens were* "*opened unto him; and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him.*" Matt. iii. 16, and 2d. because it was declared,

"*This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well* "*pleased.*" ibid ver. 17. Now a son, an only son, a well-beloved son is heir to his father's possessions. The possessions of God are divinity, eternity, omnipresence, omnipotence, omniscience, love, justice, and plenitude of Grace, with other adorable attributes, too numerous to be mentioned; perhaps too numerous to be ever known or fathomed to all eternity by any creature. But as God is an eternal spirit, so (to speak with the greatest reverence) he can never die. Hence, if Christ possesseth an inheritance, it must be (to speak after our poor language) in his father's life time. But Christ is now possessing his inheritance, given him by promise, sealed to him by the Spirit, and above all meritoriously earned by his own blood: for in the eternal decree of God, the grant runs thus: "*Thou art* "*my Son, this day have I begotten thee. Ask of* "*me, and I will give thee the heathen for thine* "*inheritance; and the uttermost parts of the* "*earth, for thy possession. Thou shalt break* "*them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them* "*in pieces like a potter's vessel.*" And oh, may we be enabled to take counsel of the Holy Spirit, speaking through the words of the royal Psalmist, "*Be wise now, therefore, O ye kings:* "*be instructed, ye judges of the earth; serve the* "*Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling.* "*Kiss the son, lest he be angry, and ye perish* "*from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a*

" *little. Blessed are all they that put their trust* " *in him.*" Psalm ii. 7 to 12.

18th. When Jesus had thus said, he was troubled in spirit, and testified and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me. John xiii. 21.

Treachery in any cause deserves the most decided reprobation and abhorrence; nor does it unfrequently bring down deserved vengeance on its author's head. Thus, when one presented a brazen bull in friendship to the tyrant of Syracuse, that he might more ingeniously practise refined species of torture, the tyrant received it, but threw in the inventor, and having heated it, caused him to be the first sufferer by his own invention. But more awful is the fall of the person now before us; the traitor Judas stands not the mark of an earthly tyrant's vengeance, who at most, could only destroy his body, but the sad object of divine wrath, he dies not by the merciless hand of a merciless tyrant, but by that greatest tyrant to all true lasting spiritual peace, a heart desperately wicked, and as such, left of God to fill up the measure of his crimes; for " *he departed, and* " *went and hanged himself.*" Matt. xxvii. 5. The apostles notice this in the Acts, and relate the event of Judas' fall. " *Men, and brethren, this scrip-* " *ture must needs have been fulfilled, which the* " *Holy Ghost, by the mouth of David, spake be-* " *fore concerning Judas, which was guide to them* " *that took Jesus. For he was numbered with us,*

" and had obtained part of this ministry. Now " this man purchased a field with the reward of " iniquity; and falling headlong, he burst asunder " in the midst, and his bowels gushed out. Where- " fore of these men which have companied with us, " must one be ordained to be a witness with us of " his resurrection. And they appointed two, Jo- " seph, called Barsabas, who was surnamed Justus, " and Matthias. And they prayed, and said, " Thou, Lord, which knowest the hearts of all " men, shew whether of these two, thou hast chosen, " that he may take part of this ministry and apos- " tleship, from which, by transgression, Judas " fell." Acts i. 16, 17, 18. 21. 23, 24, and 25. Now how awful was the fall of Judas, and how dreadful the sin which led to his fall. Nor could our Lord testify of it, without expressing signs of sorrow before all his disciples.

But I intend not to confine the present remark to that sorrow of heart, which our Lord suffered from the treachery of Judas, but to observe, that the sin of man is the only cause of the Redeemer's sorrow; and this may be observed several ways, as first, in the dishonour done to God.

The first law of God to man run thus; (and with no other condition than this affixed to it) *" Of the " tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou " shalt not eat of it; for in the day that thou " eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die."* Gen. ii. 17. Now this law (like every other law) of God, was

holy just and true; nor could it be broken without great dishonor to God; and this, because it was the only restraining law laid upon man, and because it was further backed with the severe penalty of death. Now by the rebellion of man in eating the forbidden fruit, God was dishonored, first, in the very eating of the forbidden fruit, in express contradiction to God's word; for God's word forbad them to eat of the tree of knowledge, and the context says that, "*When the woman saw that the "tree was good for food, and a tree to be desired "to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof "and did eat, and gave also unto her husband "with her, and he did eat.*" Gen. iii. 6. So that God was dishonored by man's desiring the very thing which God had forbidden; and 2d. in the destruction of that glorious image, which God had imprinted of himself upon man; which image was lost as soon as man lifted up the heel of rebellion against his Maker. Now must not God be dishonored by this injustice done to that fair and glorious image of himself, which his own hands affixed on the soul of man? And if Christ is, and was from all eternity, the bosom friend and divine fellow of God the Father, how must he be grieved, to see his divine Father so much dishonored by the workmanship of his own hands. And add to this the feelings of an offended God, who declared, that it repented him that he had made man. Not that God repenteth as man repenteth, nor that the

fall of man could undo or change the counsels of heaven, but that consistently with his justice, man was in every sense a fallen creature, and an heir of hell, and must bear the curse, unless the curse was borne instead of him: and who could possibly bear all the guilt, the sorrow, the pain, the divine displeasure, and the merited punishment of sin so as to escape unhurt, to the satisfaction of justice, but his own Son?

May we put into competition, with this cause of our Redeemer's sorrow, that he must sorrow also over *the sons of men, with* whom his "*delights* "*were, in the habitable parts of the earth, when* "*he appointed the foundations* thereof." Now this adorable Saviour delighted to walk in Eden, before its peace was disturbed; yea, even there he was "*walking in the cool of the day,*" seeking out perhaps his beloved companions and creatures, that he might hold converse with, and manifest himself unto them. I speak not this, to depreciate the divine fore-knowledge of Christ relative to the fall. I firmly believe that the heart of our adorable Saviour, often bled as by anticipation, at the thought of the fall. But this led him not to shut up his loving kindness from our parents before their fall took place.

But I observe further another cause of the Redeemer's sorrow is, 2d. In the triumph of the serpent on account of the fall.

Satan was once a bright seraph near the throne of *God*; high in favour with God, being styled by way

of eminence the Son of the Morning, yet he fell. That heart which once glowed with a fervor of heavenly devotion, fell from its pristine innocence; rebelled against God's own beloved Son, and was by him hurled from the dwellings of heaven. Yet behold him who has rebelled against God, and whom the divine thunder has struck down to hell, rising, (as being an immortal spirit) from the fall. Shame, arising from arrested pride, and disappointed malice, shame, rage, envy, and every hellish passion, spur him on to revenge. An universe just sprung from the plastic of God, possessing a delectable garden in the midst of it, holding as inhabitants, an order of beings which held a rank in creation below the dignity of angels, as having mortal bodies, yet above the dignity of all other creatures, as being possessed of immortal spirits: above all, being the delight and companions of God's own Son, his dreaded conqueror and foe. This blessed abode but kindled in the mind of Satan, the most dreadful malice and insatiable desire of making man his prey. All the schemes of hell were canvassed to invent a successful plan, which alas! was soon devised, of defacing the image of God in the soul of man. And must it not be great grief to the Son of God to see Satan triumph in the most hellish plan ever devised? To see him dragging down the whole race of mankind, as they were to spring from the loins of Adam, as his devoted and lawful prey. And well indeed was it for man, that the Lord

Jesus had resolved, whatever sorrow it should cost himself, to redeem our race from the jaws of satan, to cast him down in the midst of this triumph, and take his prey from out of his hands.

Again, the sorrow of Christ was excited in beholding,

3d. The disorder of the universe on account of the fall. I have before observed, that the deflowering Eden and disordering God's creation, were some of the consequences of the fall: hence with the rest they must be some of the causes of Christ's sorrow.

And how did the disorder of creation affect our Saviour? Why surely as it affected man: for the disorder of creation was a part of the curse entailed upon man. Did its surface begin to bring forth thorns and briars, and thistles? it was because man had sinned: and this production of noxious weeds, gave man more labor with the sweat of his brow. Did its internal caverns begin to be agitated with shocks of earthquakes, and the dreadful jarrings of internal fires? It was because man had sinned; and the fury of these have dreadfully alarmed and brought destruction upon man. Besides, there were in these, some awful indications of God's anger against sinners: for who, if he considered that he deserved the thunders of God's wrath and the flames of hell for ever, but must trace some faint similarity between *them*, and the dreadful concussions of the earth, and the flames of volcanic

fire; so that he must feel his heart tremble at the latter. And these shocks of nature, have often struck the stoutest and most rebellious heart with indescribable fear and sad presentiment of approaching judgment.

Now all these disorders arise from, and are caused by the fall: they are a part of the curse, which fell on the earth for man's transgression: and then on man as the inhabitants thereof. Now our Saviour sorrowed over the disorders of the earth, not only because man's transgression caused them, but also as said before, because his own delights were with the children of men: for he loved to walk in the delightful garden of Eden, in the cool of the day; as being the period when man would bethink himself of resting from his labors, and when also his mind would most rise up to God with contemplation and ineffable delight. But more particularly Christ sorrowed,

4th. On account of the fall, degradation and ruin of man.

It was a fall from his original righteousness, and from a state of the most holy complacency, and unspeakable delight in all God's commandments. It was consequently a fall from God's favor and blessing, to the experiencing of his frowns and of his utmost displeasure; for how can God consistently continue to cherish a creature, who no longer cherished the love of his God? It was a fall also from that knowledge of God's self, which God

had been pleased to bestow upon Adam. Not but what that knowledge was always so limited, as that God remained an incomprehensible, an unfathomable, and unsearchable God, leaving man astonished at his greatness, at a distance to gaze, admire and adore. It was also a state of exceeding degradation, for by it man lost Eden, and was shamefully driven therefrom by the sword of justice in the hand of the angel. Also man became hated by his fellow, and accusations of sin were affixed by Adam upon Eve, who even declared to the Lord, that the woman he had given, had caused him to sin. He became also sensible of his nakedness, and sought to hide it by those feeble resources that were in his power. He lost also that knowledge of God, as observed before, which he had attained, so that if he looked towards him, it could only be to behold his most strict and unrelenting justice, every where pursuing his rebellious soul. Moreover, he lost the continued presence of the Lord Christ, who no doubt had held daily visits with our first parents in the garden of Eden; instead of which, Adam first, and after him all his spiritual seed, have had to lament the absence of their Lord, who seldom appeared personally to the Old Testament church, came at last in the fulness of time for little more than 30 years, to complete the work of redemption by his blood, and who is since known only to the New Testament church, by the gracious visitations of his Spirit, seeing he is now retained in the Hea-

vens till the restitution of all things. And the ruin of man was a ruin of body and soul. The body was doomed to suffer the racking agonies of pain, sickness and disease, to drop at last into an untimely grave, and to become there the prey of the worms and insects of the earth; whilst the soul was condemned to suffer shame and remorse, to become the prey of Satan, and to be tortured with that worm that never dieth, and that fire that is not quenched. Now this was the merited lot of Adam and all his children: grace alone hath drawn a line of distinction, so that some are saved, and some are damned.

Now our Redeemer possessed sorrow of heart, when he saw the consequences of sin which would be eternally fatal to thousands.

5th. By so many being eternally ruined thereby.

This *was* a cause of sorrow to Christ. But when his inheritance was given, when his ransomed ones were sealed to him; when the justice of God was fully cleared of all imputation, in God's having mercy on whom he would have mercy, when the pardon of God's chosen was fully made sure, and he beheld in prospect, Heaven peopled with redeemed saints, then the intercessor of man could justify his heavenly Father, though thousands fell lasting victims to the effects and curses of the fall.

Lastly, then as Christ had exceeding sorrow for his own dear people, we may observe the excess of

his sufferings for those whom the Father had chosen and given unto him. To enter fully and minutely into this, would be to write the history of the sufferings of our blessed Lord. But this four Evangelists have done, under the immediate inspiration of the divine Spirit, so that from their account there is no appeal. Conceiving that all the sufferings of Christ here below, from the cradle to the cross, were intended to satisfy in some way or other for the sins of God's people, I now set down only to mention a few, observing that all of them though satisfactory, received all their efficacy from the last grand suffering on the accursed tree. And it may be observed that the sufferings of Christ were an excess of sufferings, "*My soul* (said he) *is exceeding "sorrowful, even unto death,*" Matt. xxvi. 38. Now these sufferings began as soon as he was born of the virgin's womb, for even whilst the shepherds and the wise men of the east were worshipping our Lord, Herod went about to kill him; and he was saved from the common catastrophe only by the over-ruling dispensations of Providence, warning his parents to flee with him to the land of Egypt. And during a life of 33 years only, our Lord experienced a complication of sorrows and sufferings, such as never fell to the lot of any other individual; as,

1st. He was an exile from men: in his birth, room was denied him in an inn, and he lay during the tenderest infancy in the manger of a stable. As

he grew up he was driven into Egypt, by the persecution of Herod; he was led into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil: from some places he was driven; the inhabitants of others entreated him to depart out of their coasts; so that he declared of himself, "*The foxes have holes, and the birds* "*of the air have nests; but the Son of Man hath* "*not where to lay his head,*" Matt. viii. 20. Was not this a cause of sorrow, that all the race of man should disown their rightful Lord and seem to join as by common consent to drive him from them?

2d. He was rejected by the Jews.

"*He came to his own, but his own received* "*him not,*" John i. 11. The scribes, the pharisees, the lawyers, whose duty it was to expound the law of God, the Sadduces, all joined against him: the Jews at large denied his divinity, the Pharisees hated his purity of life, the lawyers hated his sound and holy exposition of the law, the Sadduces derided his idea of the resurrection. He came to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, according to his own language, Matt. xv. 24. And he had "*Com-* "*passion on them, because they fainted, and were* "*scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd,*" ix. 36. Yet even Jerusalem despised him, to the drawing forth the most pathetic lamentation that ever fell from any lips, over any city. "*O Jeru-* "*salem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets,* "*and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how*

"*often would I have gathered thy children toge-*
"*ther, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under*
"*her wings, and ye would not. Behold your*
"*house is left unto you, desolate. For I say un-*
"*to you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye*
"*shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name*
"*of the Lord,*" Matt. xxiii. 37 to 39.

3d. He agonized in the garden of Gethsemane. "*When they had sung an hymn, they went out in-*
"*to the mount of Olives. Then cometh Jesus*
"*with them unto a place called Gethsemane, and*
"*saith unto his disciples, Sit ye here, whilst I go*
"*and pray yonder. And he took with him Pe-*
"*ter, and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to*
"*be sorrowful, and very heavy. Then saith he*
"*unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful even*
"*unto death; tarry ye here and watch with me.*
"*And he went a little farther, and fell on his*
"*face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, let this*
"*cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will,*
"*but as thou wilt.—He went away again the se-*
"*cond time, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if*
"*this cup may not pass from me, except I drink it,*
"*thy will be done.—And he left them, and went*
"*away again, and prayed the third time, saying*
"*the same words,*" Matt. xxvi. 30. 36 to 38. 42 and 44. To which Luke hath added; "*And there*
"*appeared an angel unto him from Heaven,*
"*strengthening him. And being in an agony, he*

"*prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it* "*were great drops of blood, falling down to the* "*ground,*" Luke xxii. 43, 44.

4th. He was deserted by his disciples. "*Smite* "*the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered,*" was the prophetic language of God, in Zech. xiii. 7. which language our Saviour more than once quoted, to warn his disciples against cowardice in his cause; as see Matt. xxvi. 31. and Mark xiv. 27. When Jesus was finally betrayed by Judas, and led before all his wicked accusers: "*Then all* "*the disciples forsook him and fled.*" Peter with more zeal than the rest, which was probably owing partly to the warmth of real affection, and partly from a recollection of his positive assurances, that he would never deny Christ; "*Peter,*" alone "*fol-* "*lowed him;*" yet that was "*afar off.*" Yet at last being thrice charged with being one of Christ's disciples, he denied it, and even at last "*began to* "*curse and to swear, saying, I know not the man,*" Matt. xxvi. 56. 58, and 74. Thus was Christ deserted by all his disciples, and denied by one. What sorrow must it have been to Christ to see such marks of apostacy in them; but I must not pass by another particular though it was observed before, which deeply affected our Lord: *viz.*

5th. He was betrayed by one of his disciples: the fore-knowledge of which drew from him the language of sorrow in the hearing of all his disciples; thrice he prayed to the Father that this cup

might pass from him; yet thrice he bowed his head to the divine decree, and acquiesced in the fulfilment of his own eternal covenant with the Father, whereby alone he could purchase the ransom of his chosen. And oh! what agony was here. He sweat great drops of blood, his human nature so sinking under that load of our guilt and woe, which he had undertaken to bear for his people, that an angel came from Heaven to strengthen him. Can any one look on the sufferings of Christ, and not consider rightly the cause of all, *viz.* the sins of man? Will he not hearken to the voice of God himself on this occasion: "*For the transgression of my people "was he stricken,*" Isaiah liii. 8. But again:

6th. Christ was scourged and cruelly used in the judgment-hall by his bitterest enemies.

And first, his prophetic character was held up to derision and contempt, "*The men that held Jesus "mocked him, and smote him. And when they "had blindfolded him, they struck him on the "face, and asked him, saying, Prophecy, who is it "that smote thee,*" Luke xxii. 63, 64. Next also his kingly office was derided; "*And when they "had platted a crown of thorns, they put it on "his head, and a reed in his right hand, and "they bowed the knee before him, and mocked "him, saying, Hail, King of the Jews,*" Matt. xxvii. 29. And mark what is the effect of enmity to the cross, even upon those who were bitter enemies themselves. Pilate and Herod, two bitter

enemies against each other, join in mutual compliments at the expence of Christ. "*And as soon as* "*he knew that he belonged unto Herod's jurisdic-* "*tion; he sent him to Herod, who himself also* "*was at Jerusalem at that time. And Herod and* "*his men of war set him at nought, and mocked* "*him, and arrayed him in a gorgeous robe, and* "*sent him again to Pilate. And the same day* "*Pilate and Herod were made friends together;* "*for before they were at enmity between them-* "*selves,*" Luke xxiii. 7, 11, 12. Furthermore, his enemies crowned him with a crown of thorns, whose rough and sharp points, tended only to pierce his sacred temples, and bathe them in his own blood. And observe this was the subject of prophecy: "*As many were astonished at thee;* "*his visage was so marred more than any man,* "*and his form more than the sons of men,*" Isaiah lii. 14. Again, he was compelled to bear his cross. It is true, this only is mentioned in one Evangelist, *viz.* John xix. 17. but we may observe it is not contradicted in the rest; for Matthew says, "*They* "*found a man of Cyrene, Simon by name; him* "*they compelled to bear his cross,*" xxvii. 32. Mark says, "*they compel one Simon a Cyrenian* "*who passed by, coming out of the country—to* "*bear his cross.*" Now observe they met Cymon, for he was coming out of the country; hence Jesus bore his cross till they met Simon, to whom afterwards (out of pity to Jesus, or to make as many as

possible partners of their crime) they gave the cross; and this agrees with John. Luke says, "*And as they led him away, they laid hold upon "one Simon a Cyrenian, coming out of the coun- "try, and on him they laid the cross that he might "bear it after Jesus,*" Luke xxiii. 26. Now the bearing the cross after Jesus may as well refer to taking it, after Jesus had himself borne it some time, as to Simon's bearing it and following the footsteps of Jesus: but I insist not on this; though in such a sense it would accord with John's words: but observe here, as they had led him away, they laid hold upon Simon: so that they had led Christ some distance bearing his own cross, before it was given to Simon.

Now the expression of Mark and Luke, that Simon was *coming* out of the country, seems to imply that Christ had carried his own cross all through the streets, and most probably till they had got out of the gates of Jerusalem. One fact is remarkable: Christ bore his cross willingly, but Simon bore it by constraint. For Matthew and Mark observe, they compelled Simon to bear it; and Luke that they laid hold upon Simon. An apt emblem this of all the world; they hate to touch the cross, though it is the tree of life if they bear it. Christ patiently sustains it for our good; though it is death to himself.

7th. Christ was put to death by his enemies with *circumstances* of ignominy and sorrow. The death

of the cross was a Roman punishment, executed only upon those who were the vilest malefactors: it was also a badge of subjection, which proved how much the Jews were under the government of the Romans; which circumstances must have moved the heart of Christ, to behold the judgments of God beginning to burst over the devoted Jews. "*They gave him vinegar to drink mingled with* "*gall,*" they robbed him of his garments in his dying moments, which the Roman soldiers divided among them, in such a way, as whilst it proved their rapacity, fulfilled the predictions of scripture. They denied above all his priestly office, and cried out, "*Thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest* "*it in three days, save thyself. If thou be the* "*Son of God, come down from the cross. He* "*saved others, himself he cannot save,*" Matt. xxvii.

Now two circumstances must have rendered the scene of Christ's crucifixion sorrowful, to himself, *viz.* first the lamentation of the daughters of Jerusalem; weeping in the greatest sorrow over their expiring Lord. But Christ though occupied with his own load of sufferings, cast on these an eye of sympathy and tender compassion, as he added, "*Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but* "*weep for yourselves, and for your children. For* "*behold, the days are coming, in which they shall* "*say, Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that*

" *never bare, and the paps which never gave suck,*" Luke xxiii. 28, 29.

2d. The affliction of his own mother, and the disciple John, standing by him.

And at this time it may be observed, Christ was suffering agonies on the cross. Yet he forgot her not, nor that filial tenderness he owed her who had brought him forth, but " *When Jesus saw his mo-*" *ther, and the disciple standing by whom he* " *loved, he saith unto his mother, Woman, behold* " *thy Son. Then saith he to the disciple, Be-*" *hold thy mother! And from that hour, that* " *disciple took her home,*" John xix. 26, 27. But the most oppressive and heart-rending sorrow which Christ experienced, which was as the drinking up of the cup to the very dregs; was,

8th. and lastly. Christ was deserted of the Father in the midst of the most dreadful anguish of body and mind.

This was a part of that wrath which man deserved by transgression: it therefore behoved Christ as a complete Saviour, (who was resolved to suffer, till he could triumphantly cry, " *It is finished,*") to suffer this desertion of God in our stead. Now God the Father could not look upon sin without abhorrence, nor could his Spirit rest upon the man, who was an enemy to him. Hence when Christ was suffering as a sin offering, all that we had merited for sin, God also must of necessity turn with

abhorrence from the sin offering, bearing the load of human guilt and woe. And here his human nature was bruised and broken indeed, till that bitter exclamation was extorted from him, "*My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me,*" Mark xv. 34. Now these very words were the words of prophecy, put into the lips of one of old, as declarative of the extent and sharpness of Christ's suffering: and though they happened last in order of time, yet they are prophecied first, as being the worst part of the curse which had fallen upon man, and the worst part of the curse which Christ endured instead of man. See Psalm xxii. 1. I can remember that in the days of my ignorance of spiritual things, I often reasoned on this passage, and considered it more as the language of triumph, than the effusions of sorrow, from a sin-bearing Saviour; and thus I would then have it in my own mind. "Is it for this, thou hast forsaken me?" It is true, Christ's death was a death of triumph, but the punishment due to sin, must be fully borne—and the language, "*It is finished,*" broke not from his lips, till after he had complained of desertion from God: I confess my method of reading which I then adopted would spoil this solemn scene, would seem to prove that Christ was not deserted of God; and from thence to prove that our sin merited not God's complete desertion. But I abhor now a reading of such dangerous tendency as this must be, in an infidel, or even an inexperienced hand: and would

contend that Christ did suffer in the fullest sense, desertion from God, as a part of that punishment which our sins deserved, and which he as our sin-offering endured on the cross, and it was the keen sense of this desertion, which made him cry out to his Father, "*Why hast thou forsaken me.*"

Now from all these fore-mentioned things was there abundant cause, for that sorrow, anguish, and extreme agony which Christ bore upon the cross. It was our rebellion and sin which caused him to suffer, in all that he suffered from the cradle to the cross, which embittered all those sufferings to such a degree, as no mortal ever suffered beside, or as no one without some divine support could possibly bear.

Behold also Christ suffered in those mental powers in which man had sinned, in which the offices and function of reason, conscience, understanding, will, and affections are fulfilled, and in which all these had gone astray.

Nor let the wounds his body suffered on the cross be forgotten:

> See from his head, his hands, his sides,
> Mercy and love flow mingled down.

Nor let it be forgotten, that all the wounds of Christ were inflicted upon those parts of the body, which had most signalized themselves in the ways of *sins* and errors.

The head of Christ was wounded with a crown of thorns, because man in his sin shooteth out his lip and shaketh his head against his Maker, Psm. xxii. 7. and this practice also was visible when Christ expired in anguish on the tree, for then many "*reviled him wagging their heads,*" Matt. xxvii. 39. and Mark xv. 29. The hands of Christ were wounded; because the works of men's hands are idols, wood and stone; because "*our hands are full of blood,*" Isaiah i. 15. and because we "*do evil with both hands earnestly,*" Micah vii. 3. The feet of Christ were wounded; because the *feet* of men run to evil, Prov. i. 16. and because by nature the feet of men are swift to shed blood, Rom. iii 15. And this might be observed in the speedy destruction of Abel by his brother Cain: for the first offspring of Adam ran to slay his brother, and also the destruction of Abel by his brother is the first crime recorded in sacred history after the fall. And in the description given of a wicked man, we read this; "*A wicked man speaketh with his feet,*" Prov. vi. 12, 13. And what can be the meaning of such a remarkable expression, but that he so loves the ways of sin, and so delights to walk therein, that his character may be read in his conduct, and that the actions he does are so flagrant that they speak for themselves? The side of Christ also was wounded, as being a very vital part, and so near the seat of life, whence may be argued, that the sword of justice follows the sinner till it hath

slain him; till it also has a proof of his death; as the blood and water which flowed together from the side of Christ, proves that he was really dead, and that so justice was satisfied in his finished atonement and sin-offering for us. I observe also, that before Christ's crucifixion his temples and forehead were torn with a rugged crown of thorns. Now if we consult the tokens or signs by which the leprosy was discerned under the Levitical law, we shall find they were often observable in the forehead; "*If "there be in the bald head, or bald forehead, a "white reddish sore; it is a leprosy sprung up in "his bald head, or his bald forehead. He is a "leprous man, he is unclean,*" Levit. xiii. 42. And the leprosy in the forehead was often sent as a punishment for some notorious offence: as may be observed in the case of Uzziah, king of Judah, who endeavoured to force his way to burn incense in the temple; when he was struck with a leprosy in his forehead, and remained a leper to the day of his death; see 2 Chron. xxvi. 19, 20.

Now if Christ, thus suffered pain and sorrow in our stead, how dreadful must the wound be, which sin has made in the peace of man! But let it be observed the sufferings and sorrows of Christ, do by no means preclude or forbid in God's people, a godly repentance and sorrow for sin, although it frees from the pain and anguish of a troubled, perplexed, and wounded conscience in such a degree as the wicked do often endure, when they seek rest and

find none, and also frees from that second death, which the ungodly must suffer in their own persons for ever. A godly sorrow becometh every Christian; such a sorrow as shall give a deep and abiding recollection of what we once were, with a grateful sense that a blessed and heavenly change has taken place upon us,—such a sorrow as by setting before us the terrors of the law, shall lead us, despairing of justification by the deeds of the law, to take refuge in Christ, feeling that by his wounds, his pains, his sufferings, his sorrows, his agonies, his blood, he hath opened such a tide of love and mercy, of pardon and peace, as shall never cease to flow, till all his elect are justified therein and fitted for glory.

But I hasten to another branch of Christ's doctrine.

19th. Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do, shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father. John xiv. 12.

Faith in Christ is the foundation of all good works, for without faith the heart is not in an acceptable state before God, and how can any offering be accepted from a heart in avowed enmity and open rebellion. Faith in Christ it was observed before, produced obedience to the Father, both in the affairs of providence and grace. But not only is faith the foundation of obedience, but also of every good work, properly so called in the sight of

God. I guard what I say on this head, that it must be a good work in the sight of God, that so the hope of the Pharisee, and mere moralist may be cut off. And let it here be observed, that the expectation of the Pharisee ariseth not from faith upon the obedience of Christ: his offering must be made in its own intrinsic merit. But I will examine his boasting of his good works, a little more particularly. "*God I thank thee;*" what an appearance of sanctity and thankfulness of heart! the name of God stands in the front: the language of gratitude instantly follows. What! (say some) is not this religion? The name of God is here; thankfulness is here; the uplifting of hands; and the casting of the eye to Heaven is here; is not this enough? is not this acceptable to God? By no means: for the name of God is used somewhat too irreverently; *God.* No mention is made of the attributes, perfections, and holiness of God, and the immense distance between himself and his creatures; but an impudent freedom accompanies the mention of his name; no remembrance of Christ as a Mediator; but a sudden rushing as it were to God himself, as if the Supreme Being must do nothing else but attend to this Pharisee. *I thank thee.* O how pleasant is thankfulness! But why is this Pharisee thankful? Is it for food and raiment, for the blessings of Providence and the bounties of Heaven? Is it for the riches of grace in Christ Jesus? No, for these are far from his thoughts. "*God I thank thee, that*

"*I am not as other men are.*" What art thou then O Pharisee, for which thou hast so much cause to be thankful to God? Hath he endowed thee with more blessings in Providence than others? Hath he given thee more excellent gifts, powers, and capacity of mind? Then thank God, and humbly enjoy his blessing. But stay, is this the cause? By no means. What then? we must read further; "*That I am not as other men are: extortioners, un-*" *just, adulterers.*" Alas! O Pharisee, this changeth the case. God might have blessed thee more in outward things; or might have endowed thee with more powers of reason, and embellishments of mind, or with any other desirable qualifications in temporal things. But dost thou thank him, for exempting thee as thou supposest from mental and moral transgressions? Alas! how vain; "*there is* "*none that doeth good, no not one.*" Will any say that the Pharisee might yet have cause to boast: seeing he might not be an extortioner, unjust, or an adulterer. Granted, he might not outwardly practise extortion or adultery. But might he not have been guilty of coveting his neighbors goods? Might he not have so looked upon a woman to lust after her, as to have come within the meaning of our Saviour's exposition of the word adultery; for how many are there who lust after a forbidden object, who yet are restrained by a regard to decency or worldly reputation, or held back by the checks of

natural conscience which in some is alive to gross sins, from thus openly committing them. But what had the poor publican done, who like the Pharisee went up to the temple to pray, that he should be ranked with adulterers, &c. in this opprobrious language, "*or even as this publican?*" And further, the Pharisee added, "*I fast twice in the week, I "give tythes of all that I possess,*" Luke xviii. 11, 12.

And what of all this? Could these atone for sin or purchase the favor of God? No, rather the Pharisee went down void of that justification which the publican obtained, who only "*Smote on his "breast and cried, God be merciful to me a "sinner.*" How full of zeal is the language of Paul over his brethren, the Jews, for their misguided contempt of Christ, in all that he did and suffered for the good of his people; "*Brethren,* "(says he) *my heart's desire and prayer to God for "Israel is, that they might be saved. For they "being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going "about to establish their own righteousness, have "not submitted themselves to the righteousness of "God. For Christ is the end of the law for "righteousness to every one that believeth,*" Rom. x. 1. 3, 4. But faith as producing good works must be more particularly considered. "*He that "believeth on me* (saith Christ) *the works that I "do he shall do also.* Now, first it behoveth us

to observe what are the works of Christ, and also what of those works faith in him enables us to perform.

Now the works of Christ are of three kinds, *viz.* 1st. His divine works; 2d. His miraculous works; 3d. His mediatorial works: the two last might well be joined together, seeing his miracles were performed, whilst he dwelt in his mediatorial character here below: but I separate them for distinction's sake; because all his miracles were connected with his work of redemption only in this way, that by shewing his power to heal the inveterate disorders of the bodily frame of man, they shewed the inveteracy of sin in our mental frame, and typified the power of Christ to heal the same. Now these three works of Christ may be briefly considered, as also how far we by faith can perform them.

Now the first works of Christ are his divine works—"*Thou Lord in the beginning hast laid* "*the foundation of the earth, and the Heavens* "*are the works of thine hands,*" Heb. i. 10. Now if Christ by his power could make the Heavens and the earth, it may reasonably be supposed, nay it may be fairly inferred, that Christ can also make those inhabitants that dwell therein. Inferred do we say? It is the very language of scripture; "*Who maketh his angels spirits, his ministers a* "*flaming fire,*" Psm. civ. 4. Not only doth he make them, but he maketh them spirits, possessing a never ending existence, from the moment when

he calleth them into being: and though as far beneath his own essential dignity as light is from darkness, yet still so bright as to be likened unto a flaming fire.

Now further, also the divine works of Christ are employed in those instruments of terror, death and destruction, which he hath prepared for the confusion and punishment of all his foes: the thunder and lightening of divine vengeance are his; for "*at "thy rebuke they fled; at the voice of thy thunder "they hasted away.*" I speak not this to set up Christ as a law giver, and so to fill the mind of the sinner that wishes to approach him with indescribable awe; but to shew what he is in his divine nature, without what he is in his mediatorial one. What Christ is, as being consolatory and full of mercy to his people, he is in consequence of an immutable covenant with the Father: it is his office—relations to us as our kinsman-redeemer, intercessor, and friend, that make him that friend that he is: for as God the Father out of Christ is a consuming fire; so God the Son out of his eternal covenant and office-relations to us is a consuming fire also. Take away the human nature of Christ in his voluntary assumption of the manhood; and he standeth a God inexorably just; he with the Father sustaineth the honor of, and avengeth the insult done to, an offended Godhead, without being a ransom, and without sustaining by imputation, the sin of offending man. Take away his Godhead, and he hath no

merit to atone by, no power to redeem. Thus his Godhead, by virtue of which he hath power to covenant with the Father, and offer satisfaction to a broken law; and his manhood, in which he is the law fulfiller in our stead; these two I say being joined together, make a perfect and complete Christ; honoring God by fulfilling his broken law in our stead; and saving man, by becoming a substitute for, and a redeemer of us. But we desist speaking of Christ's divine works, seeing that his chief relation to us in the character of Savior, belongeth to those works which we must soon mention. But before we quite quit this subject, we must ask what of Christ's divine works doth faith in him, enable us to perform? None surely. For whatsoever is divine, belongeth exclusively to him who is divine. Now can faith in Christ enable us to form or assist in forming the Heavens and the earth: in creating angels, those bright messengers or attendants of Christ, or in creating that thunder by which vengeance is executed upon all the works of iniquity? No. Faith in Christ then, admits us not to any of the power, authority, or honor of God: but teaches us rather so, to see our own unworthiness, that we feel how inadequate we are to any of such things: and rather leads us to commit the keeping of ourselves, body, and soul, to him as into the hands of a faithful Creator. 1 Pet. iv. 19. Now the works of Christ are;

2d. His miraculous works. Passing by, the appearances of our Lord Jesus to the Old Testament saints, in which he appeared under the name of Wonderful, we may observe; 1st. That his suffering himself by the assumption of the human nature, to proceed from the womb of the virgin, after the slow process of ordinary generation, was a most wonderful and miraculous exertion of divine power. This the Jews have denied, and have even impeached the character of the blessed Virgin Mary, as being most notoriously profligate. But in answer to this; let us observe the pious scruples of Joseph to whom she was betrothed, and how even an angel from Heaven was sent to dissipate those scruples, to the full vindication of his betrothed bride. "*Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise; When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost. Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not willing to make her a public example, was minded to put her away privily. But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife; for that which is conceived in her, is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS, for he shall save his people from their sins,*" Matt. i. 18 to

21. Now what a miraculous and astonishing exertion of divine power was this? 1st. As to its cause, the love of Christ to fallen man; 2d. As to the manner of it as before stated, where the incarnate God comes down, and in order to take fully our nature, (sin excepted), submits to be born of a pure virgin. 3d. As to the consequences of it, to ensure the redemption of his people.—Further, we may observe another miracle of our Lord, which soon called forth much attention; at a marriage feast at which Christ was present, it seems there was a scarcity of wine; and Jesus commanded them to fill six water pots of stone, with water, which he by his power changed into wine. Now without reciting more particulars, we may make a few reflections on this: as 1st. Christ appeareth to a hungry thirsty soul, when all other refreshments are exhausted: "*When they wanted wine,*" they applied to Jesus through his mother; thus when all the pleasures of the world are found by experience to be not worth possessing, how the soul flies to Christ desiring to be filled with his blessings. 2d. The cleansing fountain of Christ's blood, is worth all the ceremonial purification which the world delights in: "*There were set six water pots of stone,* "*after the manner of the purifying of the Jews;*" most likely placed there, that according to their traditions they might not eat with unwashen hands. And this ceremony was with the Jews so indispensable, that they accused Christ's disciples of slight-

ing that custom. But behold when their water pots are empty, and void of that water which sanctified to the purifying of the flesh, Christ cometh and filleth them with wine, typical of his own blood, the wine of his kingdom, which cleanseth the believer from all manner of sin. 3d. Christ's blood when tasted more delights the soul, than any thing it ever tasted before. "*When the ruler of* "*the feast had tasted the water that was made* "*wine;—the governor of the feast called the* "*bridegroom, and saith unto him, Thou hast kept* "*the good wine until now.*"

Though he had tasted the other wine, and no doubt had relished it, yet having tasted this he calls it good, thinking none other good in comparison of it.

4th. Christ's blood comes unexpectedly and contrary to the custom of the world.

The governor of the feast, called the bridegroom to know the reason of the event; it was something unexpected, that at the end of the merriment of the wedding feast, something more should be added to give a zest to the entertainment; so God's people wonder, when they have tasted all the pleasures of the world, Christ should have some greater pleasure, which possesseth this great advantage over all they had before, that it leaveth no sting behind. Further, the ruler of the feast makes this remark, "*Every man at the beginning, doth set forth* "*good wine; and when men have well drunk,*

"*then that which is worse;*" but Christ dealeth not so; he poureth in by little and little the riches of his grace, that so a continual and delightful novelty may enliven his feast, and add to the joy of his guests; also in the economy of redemption; Christ poured not out such rich discoveries of his grace, nor such sweet out pourings of his Spirit, nor such clear views of himself to the Old Testament saints, though they had always as much as exercised their faith and kept alive their hope; but kept adding by little and little till his own glorious appearing in the flesh; and at last gave to his followers, his spouse, his church, the richest wine of his kingdom on the day of Pentecost, when his Spirit was shed abroad in all their hearts, to the consummation of their joy in this earthly state. Now of Christ's attendance at the marriage supper in Cana, mentioned in the second chapter of John, is this remarked, "*This beginning of miracles did* "*Jesus in Cana of Galilee,*" intimating that this was the first public miracle wrought by him, after he was born of a woman. And if this was the case, let us take comfort, that the first miracle of our Lord was intended to typify the excellency and virtue of his blood. But to speak of Christ's miraculous works one by one, would make a book of itself; I observe therefore upon all the rest, that they typify the efficacy of all he doth for the good of sinners: as did he heal the sick? we being by sin diseased, he healeth us. Did he give sight to

the blind? us who were in darkness he enlighteneth by his Spirit. Did he give hearing to the deaf? our ears he unstoppeth, that we may hear with our ears, and understand with our hearts. Did he heal those who were bowed down with infirmity? He raiseth up them who by sin are bowed down, bending under the load of their sins, and helpeth them to lay that burden on his cross which they have born themselves. Did he give feet to the lame? So he lifteth up them that fall, and who having walked in the ways of darkness, stumbled and fell, (except for his hand) never to rise. Now are these works which faith in Christ enables us to perform? By no means. It is true the apostles had the power to restore those who were diseased in body, and that by the mention of the name of the Lord Jesus. But even that extraordinary gift hath ceased with the primitive ages; nor had they the power to forgive sins; they could say, if thou believest thy sins will be forgiven, but they could not say thy sins be forgiven. Hence the miracles of Christ being attendant proofs of his divinity cannot be performed by his followers through faith in his name, and though the apostles performed the bodily cure, they could do no more; and even that gift hath ceased, as the want of it hath ceased, by the greater spread of the gospel: further, the works of Christ are,

3d. His mediatorial works. Mediation is the interposing the offices of a third person, between the

offender and offended, and comprehends in the gross, all that is done either in offering satisfaction or renewing friendship. And of such a nature is the mediation of Christ, he hath voluntarily interposed between an offended God, and offending man; and promised let the consequences be what they would, to pay the debt that was between them; to offer all the satisfaction, either could justly demand, and make a lasting friendship though purchased and sealed with his own blood. Now the mediatory works of Christ, are his sufferings and death with all that appertaineth thereto; but as of these I have spoken when shewing how the sin of man was the cause of the Redeemer's sorrow, it would be needless to renew them: yet a few words may not unaptly be spoken, on the effects resulting from Christ's mediatory works; now these are, 1st. Reconciliation to God. Look at God without Christ, and we behold him to be a consuming fire: we may dread his wrath, but we desire not to love him; we may know and even anticipate the torments of the damned; but we shall only blaspheme God as we think of anguish. Man is not to be won by terrors. The law itself is to the natural man but the hardener of the heart; and drives him far from repentance, as shewing that not only would repentance without faith be of no avail, but also that repentance is out of man's power. But the cross of Christ has a soothing power. Hard was the cross to Christ on which himself expired, and harder

from the bitterness of his sufferings, and the desertion of his Father, God. But it hath a softening, a soul-subduing, a soul-melting quality even to the obdurate sinner. Doth he look to the cross? he seeth innocence bleeding there. Doth he ask why it bleedeth? His heart smites him, his spirit misgives him. Innocence could not suffer for innocence sake. Guilt must have caused it to suffer. Yet who was guilty and what the offence? The offence was singular, for the punishment is so. Have angels sinned? Some sinned, but they are now in hell: the cross was never set up for them: for whom then? Hath man sinned? What shall I say? Hath man sinned? Nature frowns on man, the Godhead too. The Godhead frowns. Yet I am a man. Have I sinned too? Then hath Christ died for me. Conscience awake, and let thy voice shoot upward to the skies to ask if I have sinned. Yes I have, the voice comes thundering back, and tells me I am a sinner: for whom then hath Christ died? for sinners. I am one. Lord help me to receive the great atonement, and give me thy Spirit, that I may plead before the Father what thou hast done for sinners vile as me.

Now such is the blessed use which the Spirit makes of the cross, in the hearts of the man born a sinner in the sight of God. That blessed comforter leadeth the proud sinner, with a heart of flint, and a forehead of brass to the foot of the cross. Is such an heart a proper soil for the growth

of Christian graces? In itself it is not: but no heart is improper when softened by the blood that flows from the cross, through the application of the blessed Spirit. What I have written is the language of a sinner. But oh! it is the language of a softened sinner, whose heart is melted by the stream that issues from a wounded Saviour's side; whose heart is stolen for God, by the Spirit; and by its influence is led in faith, hope, love, gratitude, and heavenly affection to love Christ Jesus, and God the Father for Christ's sake. Thus behold the Spirit's influence. Can man do this? Can man command himself or fellow creature to the foot of the cross? Can he bring him there in open enmity and constrain him to go away a friend? If so, what need of the blessed influences of the Holy Spirit: if not so: then little hath man indeed to do in the mediatory work of the Son of God.—The merit of which doth alone belong to the glorious God-man, God manifest in the flesh to save sinners. Now other results and blessed effects of Christ's mediatory work to us, are victory over the world, the flesh and the devil, which for brevity's sake, I must mention altogether.

"*In the world* (says Christ) *ye shall have tri-*
"*bulation.*" Temptation will be used; and when that fails, persecution will begin; "*but, be of good*
"*cheer; I have overcome the world.*" Now can any one overcome the world of himself? No; he must be born of God; "*whatsoever* (says John)

"*is born of God, overcometh the world*; *and this* "*is the victory that overcometh the world, even* "*our faith*," 1 John v. 4. "*With the flesh*, (saith "St. Paul) *I serve the law of sin*," Rom. vii. 25. Was it a thing desirable to Paul, that his flesh should serve sin? No. For he declares he had a law in his members that brought him into captivity to sin, and so dreadful did he account the bondage thereof, that he cried out, "*O wretched man that* "*I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this* "*death*." And to deliver us from this cruel bondage, Christ by his Spirit putteth enmity between the flesh and the spirit, so that whilst "*the flesh* "*lusteth* (or contendeth) *against the spirit, the* "*spirit lusteth against the flesh*," Gal. v. 27. So that in this contest the strongest must gain the victory. Now the devil hath been the enemy of man from the beginning; he seduced our first parents, and gained the mastery over them. He triumphs over all the seed of Adam, in such a way, as would be for our everlasting ruin, but for the riches of grace in Christ Jesus. He tempted Christ Jesus, the seed of the woman, who took our nature upon himself, sin only excepted: and had not Christ been free from moral evil, satan had conquered Christ also. But *he* being perfect God and perfect man, the rage of satan was vain against him. Now Christ was pleased to come into the world, through all the processes and gradations of human nature, thus following satan through all his windings and turnings,

that he might take him in his own devices. He submitted to be born of a virgin, to be tempted of satan, and lastly, by dying, to descend into hell, that he might arrest the hand of satan in his work of ruin, and spoil death of his double destruction. Now could man through faith imitate Christ in these things, and do as *he* did? No. Man is no helper with God in the affair of redemption, no, nor even in the works of Creation which we behold every day. God is his own workman, contriving and executing far above the skill and cunning of mortal man. What then doth faith enable man to perform? Hath faith no good works to perform? Yes, verily, and though the work of salvation is done and completed by God: yet the work of sanctification remaineth for man to do, through the power of the Holy Spirit. Man too must conquer the world, the flesh and the devil; not meritoriously, for that Christ hath done, nor efficaciously, as conquering them in his own name; for even this must be done, "*In the name of the Lord Jesus,* "*and by the Spirit of our God,*" but faith must lay hold of the complete conquest of Christ, and plead it before God, against rising corruption, at a throne of grace. Now faith in Christ will lead us to hate those enemies which he hath conquered, as being the common enemies of himself and us; will lead us as much as possible to hold no fellowship with them; knowing they lead to the chambers of death: and will lead us to esteem the cross of

Christ by which they are conquered for us, more precious than all the enjoyments of this world: but I observed, sanctification was a fruit or work of faith in Christ. Now this we can carry on, and must carry on, through Christ that liveth in us, and this remains to be considered.

Now sanctification is, 1st. A gradual work, it is a work of which Christ set us a perfect and complete example. "*He that believeth* "*on me,* (saith Christ) *the works that I do,* "*shall he do also.*" And in another place whilst Christ prays the Father for the sanctification of his people; he adds, "*And for their* "*sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be* "*sanctified through the truth,*" John xvii. 19. Now it is a gradual work, and that for this reason; that in no man is the body of sin and death subdued, we carry it with us to our dying day, and shall lay it down at last only as we are clothed upon by the Lord Jesus. And does not Christian experience testify this? Our life is a warfare against all the powers of hell and the devil. Satan is disturbing our repose; often wounding our peace, often disappointing our hopes, often marring our joy, often shaking our faith; mixing his poison with the waters of life, drawing away our hearts, and shortening the duration of those moments when we enjoy the most delightful communion with God; dragging us to the law, that we may despair of mercy, or giving us false peace, amidst unrepented of transgressions. Now the work of sancti-

ication is to counteract these. Now we gain more aith whereby we stand firmer on the footing of vhat Christ hath done and suffered for us; now nore hope; whereby we are less cast down, amidst bereavements of Providence, or hidings of God's ace for a season; and though we feel as sensibly the hidings of God's face, we more patiently wait for a renewed visitation, peevishly chiding not God or long delays: now we drink deeper of those treams which make us glad, and with more faith pply the merits of Christ's blood as the grand an- idote to satan's devices; now we are enabled by God's Spirit, to keep our hearts closer to God, nd oftener, (if not longer at once) in communion vith him; now we despise the threatenings of the aw, seeing how Christ hath fulfilled the law for us; ow we learn not to rest for a moment in peace, vhilst sins lay with dead weight on the conscience, nrepented of and unforgiven.

2d. Sanctification is an heart work. "*Sanctify* ' (saith the apostle) *the Lord God in your hearts,*" 1 Pet. iii. 15. Now the heart is by nature the seat of all wickedness; a nest of ungodliness, and the storehouse of pollutions; and what proceedeth from hence, doth tend to defile the whole man: "*Those* ' *things,* (saith Christ) *which proceed out of the* " *mouth, come forth from the heart; and they de-* " *file the man. For out of the heart proceed evil* " *thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts,* " *false witness, blasphemies: these are the things*

"*which defile a man,*" Matt. xv. 18, 19, 20. Now in regard to the love of God, which must be the main spring of all true sanctification; this is natural to man as well as angels in a state prior to the fall. Did not man love his God, when that God walked among the trees of the garden of Eden, and most probably held converse with his creatures?—But passing this by: man by the fall hath lost that love of God, and doth now in his fallen nature, hate all the adorable attributes of God; yet both the law and the gospel equally demand supreme love to God from man: the law ordains, "*Thou shalt love* "*the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with* "*all thy soul, and with all thy might,*" Deut. vi. 5. x. 12. xi. 1, &c. the gospel re-echoes it. "*Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy* "*heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy* "*mind. This is the first and great command-* "*ment;*" to which another is added springing from the first: "*And the second is like unto it, Thou* "*shalt love thy neighbour as thyself,*" Matt. xxii. 37 to 39. Mark xii. 30. 33. Luke x. 27. Now as to the love of God, seeing all men have lost that love to him; seeing also that he can no longer love us, but in Christ, so neither can we love him, but as we feel the love of Christ, shed by the Spirit, in belief of his name, abroad in our hearts. "*We* "*love him* (says the beloved disciple) *because he* "*first loved us,*" 1 John iv. 19. Now what greater motive to stimulate our love to God, than the con-

sideration of his exceeding love to us; as first, we receive from him life, breath and being, which life is forfeited in its first commencement to his justice, as the demerit of our transgressions: we receive also the numerous bounties of Providence, preservation in life, &c. from him; and these are instances of the general love or universal good-will which he beareth to all mankind. But these constitute not, nor are any part of the dealings of his grace. God loveth *all* in a way of Providence; but he loveth in grace those only whom he hath chosen in Christ. What! say some are we to consider not the benevolence and mercy of the deity, as too great to lead him to love some and hate others? Let such hear the word of God. "*They* "*are not all Israel, which are of Israel. Neither* "*because they are the seed of Abraham, are they* "*all children; but in Isaac shall thy seed be* "*called. That is, they which are the children of* "*the flesh, these are not the children of God;* "*but the children of the promise are counted for* "*the seed. For this is the word of promise, At* "*this time will I come, and Sarah shall have a son.* "*And not only this, but when Rebecca had also* "*conceived by one, even by our father Isaac;* "*(For the children being not yet born, neither* "*having done any good or evil, that the purpose* "*of God according to election might stand, not* "*of works, but of him that calleth). It was said* "*unto her, The elder shall serve the younger.*

" *As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau* " *have I hated,*" Rom. ix. 6 to 13. A few things must be very briefly observed on these few verses. All are not children, because they are the seed of Abraham: and why? Because he hath been pleased to limit the sonship and adoption to Isaac's seed, from which Christ lineally descended, whose type Isaac was as being a child of promise; as being typically slain, and received again by his Father in a figure, as St. Paul observes, Heb. xi. 19.

Now the children of fleshly Abraham are not sons, for Ishmael is rejected, and it is spoken of him, " *Ishmael will be a wild man; his hand will* " *be against every man, and every man's hand* " *against him; and he shall dwell in the presence* " *of all his brethren,*" Gen. xvi. 11, 12. The meaning of this passage I must wave, as I have not time in this little work, to treat it fully; as it does not immediately belong to my subject, and as it is handled by Bishop Newton in his Dissertations on Prophecies, Vol. I. pages 20 to 35. But the children of believing Abraham are sons; and such a son was Isaac, both of whom were of Christ's spiritual seed, *which* Christ was to spring from them in lineal descent. Now the children of the promise are the seed, and Isaac was a child of promise, Ishmael was not. So Christ's seed are the children of promise; the seed of the devil are not. The ties of flesh and blood join not in grace: *Jacob have I loved, and Esau I have hated.* Why was this love

and hatred so settled in the mind of God? was it for some good work? No. "*For the children* "*were not yet born, and had done neither good* "*or evil.*" Why then was this? It was a pure act of sovereignty in God: "*That the purpose of* "*God according to election might stand.*" Now what kind of a purpose is this in the mind of God, by which "*hath he mercy on whom he will have* "*mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth,*" ver. 18. It is an eternal purpose; "*According unto* "*the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ* "*Jesus our Lord,*" Ephes. iii. 11. Hence the love of God towards his chosen is everlasting: it is in Christ a living head: the emphatic seed of the woman; in whom all the chosen seed are blessed. Now if God hath loved his people in Christ from everlasting; what a handle hath faith to lay hold of, strong as the horns of the altar, from which not all the force or malice of satan can drag the believing soul. And here the believer stands, and thinks within himself, if God loved me from everlasting; from everlasting pitched upon his Son as the only fit ranson for me; if the Son willingly from everlasting offered to die for me; if I am chosen thus, whilst numbers, who are not so vile sinners as myself, are doomed to perish everlastingly: if the Holy Spirit is given me as a part of this covenant, to work in me repentance, faith, hope, love, and every christian grace: what shall I

do, but endeavour by the help of the Spirit, to repent, believe, hope, and love my God and Saviour. Now faith in Christ lays the basis of every good work: believing what is done for me, I love the hand that did it, believing that God hath chosen me to sanctification, I pray to be sanctified, I endeavor to be sanctified in the help of the Spirit, and do all I can to prove I am a child of God, and thus make my calling and election sure. Now this faith in Christ having caused me to be fruitful in all good works towards God, leads me also to love my fellow creatures: and while I have a right view of their infirmities, and even lament to think that thousands go on carelessly in sin, and never will repent, because God hath not chosen them to repentance: yet I wish for their salvation, if it could be done consistent with Jehovah's sovereign grace. Now to the children of man, I have two sorts of love; one to the whole mass of community, believers and unbelievers, because they are brethren in the flesh, possessing with me all infirmity of body, sickness, disease, calamity and pain; because in the dealings of Providence, they are equally under the care, and equally experience the good will of God, and equally deserving, (seeing all are sunk equally low by sin) of every blessing; now this love is temporal and must end with time; if I gain eternal bliss then must I hate what God hates, and love only what he loves; though even now it

must be observed, I hate the sin whilst I have bowels of mercy for the obstinate sinner. Another love I have for God's people: a divine love, for I dare use the expression. I love them for Christ's sake, because he hath loved them; and because they are chosen of God in him as well as me: they have the same joys and sorrows in temporal things, the same joys and sorrows in spiritual things as I. Equally they love their Saviour; equally they are beloved of him. Do I love them? they also love me. Love begetteth love; theirs begetteth mine, and mine theirs; we love each other by the precept and after the example of that Saviour, who hath for all his chosen seed a loving heart.

In this way I have spoken of the fruits of faith, as twofold; love to God and love to my neighbour; I love God because he hath loved me; my love to God constraineth me willingly to love my neighbour. O willing constraint, O forced good will, O obedient freedom. My Lord, and my God, binds me in the sweet constraint of love, to love him, to love his creatures as he loves them, to love his saints as he loves them; he binds me to be heavenly in my affections, spiritual in my love; prudent in the object, fervent in the regard. He constraineth me to love all created things for Christ's sake by whom and for whom they are and were created. Yea he maketh Christ, the object and mover of my faith, the ground work and centre of my love; round which my faith and my love, and all my im-

planted graces perform their orbits, according to the dictates and direction of his free spirit.

But whither am I mounting? Do I climb to Pisgah's top, like Moses of old already taking a view of the promised land? few can walk long on the top of the mountain; all must descend to the plains. If now we walk high in communion with God, anon, we fall; satan tempts, the world allures; a wicked heart pulls us back; nor lets us stay long on the top of the mountains; hence we may observe;

3d. Sanctification is a work not perfect here below. "Justification is perfect in this life, (says "one) so is not sanctification." And why is it not? Because the body of sin and death must remain in a man as long as he remains here below. It is God's appointed lot, intended to try the faith and exercise the patience of the saints.

Now this is an awful proof of the dreadful contamination of all men by sin, that it cannot be eradicated as long as the body stands in its present structure: now this was exemplified and enforced under the law. If the plague should have "*spread* "*in the walls of the house: then the priest shall* "*command that they take away the stones, in* "*which the plague is.—And if the plague come* "*again, and break out in the house; after that* "*he hath taken away the stones.—Then the priest* "*shall come— and he shall break down the house,* "*the stones of it, and the timber thereof, and all*

"*the mortar of the house; and he shall carry*
"*them forth ont of the city, into an unclean*
"*place,*" Levit. xiv. 39 to 45. Now thus so dreadful is the plague of sin in the body, that the body in all his joining and contextures, must be taken down and carried to that unclean place the grave, the common receptacle of all that is vile and loathsome in the sight of God, before the leprosy of sin can be totally eradicated from it. But is this a burthen or troublesome to the believer? It is in considering the cause, but not in the effect. The cause is sin which often giveth great pain and sorrow of heart to every believer. The effect is, the laying down this body of sin and death, when God commandeth, and entering on another and a better world: Job in the prospect of dissolution could comfort his soul thus; "*I know that my Re-*
"*deemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the*
"*latter day upon the earth. And though after*
"*my skin, worms destroy this body, yet in my*
"*flesh I shall see God,*" Job xix. 25, 26. Paul also endeavours to dispel the doubts of believers on this head: "*But some men* (says he) *will say,*
"*How are the dead raised up? and with what*
"*body do they come? Thou fool, that which thou*
"*sowest, is not quickened, except it die.—So also*
"*is the resurrection of the dead, it is sown in cor-*
"*ruption, it is raised in incorruption; it is sown*
"*in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in*
"*weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown a*

"*natural body, it is raised a spiritual body,*" 1 Cor. xv. 35, 36. 42 to 44.

But if sanctification is not perfect, is it not progressive here below? Yes, blessed be God, or else a Christian would labor in vain. Now to observe what sanctification is. It is holiness like the very image of God, let down into the soul of man. It is a fruit wrought by the Spirit, through faith in the cross. It reigneth in the heart of sinners, but of sinners won over, by the love of God being shed abroad in their hearts. Now what doth experience teach in regard to its dwelling in the soul? To speak my own experience; it dwelleth in a heart not yet made perfect: and that looketh not for perfection on this side the grave. It dwelleth in an heart which hath been the seat one time or other of most known sins. Shall I read St. Paul's catalogue of the fruits of the flesh? "*Adultery, for-*
"*nication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry,*
"*witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath,*
"*strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders,*
"*drunkenness, revellings, and such like,*" Gal. v. 19 to 21. Now if I read these over never so often, what must I say, but that I know not which to spare, as not being of the number of my sins? Many I have committed, over and over again; most of them have been thought over in my mind, with a secret relish, a carnal gratification, and a devilish delight. Now in regard to the commission of sin, I speak of what happened to me, before the grace

of our Lord Jesus Christ prevented me, and his Spirit renewed me, (as I trust it has renewed me) to repentance, and life everlasting. In regard to the secret relish, I speak of the disposition of my mind after the beginnings of grace. I feel I sin daily in the thoughts of my heart; and by such sinful thoughts offend God, and deserve the pains of hell for ever. Yet shall I say because of this, that I know nothing of the sanctifying influence of the Holy Ghost? God forbid, for then were I dead in sin indeed. If I feel a carnal heart and a sinful nature, I feel sanctification is opposed to that sinful nature; yea, and I feel at times a new principle within me, (which I am persuaded is wrought by the Spirit) opposing with all its might the natural propensities of my sinful nature. Doth my old nature get the advantage at times? It is because Satan is stronger than me. Yet I yield reluctantly, and rise again when God again revisits my soul. But I have worse to tell, for I must tell the worst. Sometimes I yield willingly to sins in thought, word and action, proving myself thus more worthy of being called a child of hell, than an heir of Heaven. Now this makes me lament day by day. But thus I comfort myself; there is (say I) a great difference between the state and the disposition of my heart. My state (if chosen of God) is fixed for ever. It is a good state, being wrought in me by God's good Spirit, placing me in the everlasting arms of Christ, which will evermore support me,

whereas I was once under the dominion of the devil. But my disposition is by nature bad; and the remains of it continually remind me of my fallen nature; but I am chosen to sanctification, as well as faith. I am in my state altered for the better, it hath given me also a love to God, and delight in his truth, so that my bad disposition, however aided by Satan's devices, shall not finally prevail and gain the mastery over me. I look for the coming of my Lord Jesus Christ; and when he cometh, I shall be like him for I shall see him as he is, face to face. Then I shall be completely sanctified, perfect in him; I shall become "*a pillar in the "temple of my God, and shall go no more out,*" Rev. iii. 12.

Thus I have endeavoured to shew, how faith in Christ is the foundation of good works; *viz.* first, In love to God, and delight in serving him; 2d. In love to our fellow creatures for his sake; especially to those who are of the household of faith, whom we love for Christ's sake, with an affection far above the feeling of the world; 3d. In labouring in the strength of the Spirit after full sanctification, by giving up our whole body, soul, and spirit unto God. May we possess true faith in Christ: then will good works spring up out of our lively faith; then will God be honored, his church edified, his people comforted; and when by Christ's second coming, the top-stone of his beautiful and everlasting temple shall be laid on, with the shouting of glorified

Spirits, rejoicing angels and chosen saints, saying, Grace, grace unto it; then may we join their number, and sing eternal praises to him who hath redeemed us to God by his dear blood.

20th. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you. John xvi. 23.

Prayer is the breath of an heaven born soul, and a proper employment for every one who professeth to be a Christian: and this all professors must confess, if pressed to give a decided answer to the question. And it may be observed, that all heathen mythology, encouraged invocation and the exercise of prayer, whether offered to idols or pretended gods. The Old Testament affords us a notable instance of this in the priests of Baal. They wanted their God to come down to consume the burnt-offering which they had prepared for him; and for this purpose they cried, "*O Baal, hear "us,*" 1 Kings xviii. 26. But though they cried from morning to night, "*there was no voice, nor "any that answered.*" Now it is only the one living and true God who can answer prayer: for the rest are no gods, and either the work of men's hands, or if men, raised by men to the honor of gods, have no power to help.

Now the object of prayer is God the Father, as we learn from the prayer of our Saviour, "*Our "Father which art in Heaven,*" and many other places, as particularly in John xvii. 1. 4. 11. 21.

24 and 25. Now the reason of this is first in a way of Providence, as especially in the work of creation: "*In the beginning, God created the* "*Heaven and the Earth.—And the Spirit of* "*God moved upon the face of the waters,*" Gen. i. 1, 2. Here God the Father is mentioned in a particular manner; the Beginning or God the Son, called, "*The Beginning of the Creation of God,*" Rev. iii. 14, is mentioned also, as the instrument or fellow-workman of the Father; God the Spirit is also spoken of, as giving life to the whole.

Now here in the first outset of the Bible, if any thing is to be gathered of a Trinity, (and surely a Trinity of Persons in the Godhead may be gathered) it is this; that though the Father is first as a creating cause, it being said, "*God created,*" yet there is no priority of persons, that superior dignity should be attached thereto; seeing the Son stands first in the order of the chapter. Why then is God the Father mentioned in a peculiar way? Because he is as it were the spokesman and president of the whole, in whose handiworks the others both co-operate and agree. If it be asked whether it be right to pray to every person of the Deity, and to pay them divine honors, I answer yes, verily: for we may continually pray thus to the Son: 'Lord 'Jesus apply the merits of thy blood, by the energy 'of thy Spirit, to our souls,' or we may add with holy Stephen in the very agonies of death, "*Lord* "*Jesus receive my Spirit,*" Acts vii. 59. Or

thus to the Holy Spirit. 'O ever blessed, divine 'and Holy Spirit, gracious comforter, descend and 'fill our souls: help us to plead the merits of Christ's 'death and passion with the Father, give us a sweet 'sense of thy cheering presence, that we may love 'thyself and all holiness, and under thy guidance and 'power press forward for eternal joy.' Now these two divine persons may be most properly addressed in ejaculatory prayer, or the secret lifting up of the heart in short and fervent petitions; as also the Father may be thus addressed: 'Holy Father receive 'us for Christ's sake, and send down renewed visita-'tions of thy Spirit, that we live to thy glory, and 'may be preserved from giving up our hearts to sin 'against thee.'

Now of ejaculatory prayer it may be observed, that it comprehends the very essence of true devotion in the sight of God. To suppose a few short petitions put up morning and evening, or even if noon day be added, or even if like the royal psalmist seven times a day, to suppose these to be all the worship God receives from his creatures, we must say if we think aright, Lord how little reverence do we pay thee!—Time, place, circumstance, and situation of life, the calls of business, the lawful pursuits of lawful concerns, and the various duties of public, social, private and domestic life, though not carried on to undue lengths, do in the present state of society, demand that attention from all, which is incompatible with frequent returns of pri-

vate devotion, and in many situations of life, where the business of the day is of a sedentary nature, requiring close application, or of an active nature, requiring manual labor, or carried on at a distance from home, such stated devotions is next to impossible. But who can say that his thoughts may not rise to Heaven? Yea here, may the hearts of a christian rise seventy times a day from amidst his occupation, and by faith in Christ rejoice in God with exceeding joy. Nay, ejaculatory prayer hath this advantage, that it is often more fervent and more suited to the actual wants of the soul, either as wishing for more love to God, more faith in Christ, more dependance on the Spirit, or more strength to conquer inherent corruption.

Consequently such short addresses, flowing secretly and irresistibly from the heart, do generally shew more faith, love, hope, gratitude, obedience, and joy in the Holy Ghost, in the person so continually lifting up his heart unto God.

But in stated prayer, either in private and closet devotion, by the head of a family, before the household, or in more public acts of worship, perhaps the term God or Jehovah is more preferable, as expressing the undivided Trinity, without confusion or intermixing of persons: if so be that all be asked, "*In the name of the Lord Jesus, and by "the Spirit of our God,*" 1 Cor. vi. 11. Now of all the names which we can pitch upon by which to address God, perhaps none doth so clearly ex-

press the incommunicable and inexpressible glory of God, or more clearly set forth the essence and nature of the Trinity, than the name Jehovah. A name which the Jews, out of a superstitious regard to the tenor of the third commandment, most scrupulously refrained from uttering. And as far as relates to the division or dignity of persons expressed in that name, I quote from a celebrated author on the subject. "These *Cabalists* (says he) also asserted, that the doctrine, (*i. e.* of the Trinity) was "to be found in the very construction of the name "JEHOVAH. They observed, that, though the "name contains *four* letters, (whence it is called "τετραγραμμαῖον), there are but *three different* letters "in its composition. Thus according to them, "י *Jod*, signifies the *Father*, the maker of all "things; ו *Vau*, a conjunction copulative, denotes "the *blessed Spirit*, proceeding from the *Father* "and the *Son* conjointly; and ה *He*, implies the "*Son* of God. They have also a saying, that God "made all things in the letter ה *He*; alluding to "his creation of all things by the *Word* or *Son*. "And lastly, that the ה is doubled in this name, to "demonstrate the *two natures* of the *Messiah*." Serle's Horæ Solitariæ, Vol. I. pages 476, 477, 3d. edition.

Now the reason why God the Father is to be addressed particularly in prayer: is,

2d. In a way of grace. God the Father, as

hath been observed before, sustaineth the honor of the whole offended Godhead. He is that consuming fire which burneth up his adversaries, and will rid himself eventually of all his enemies. The knowledge we have of God the Father is, that he is a jealous God, jealous for his honor with an exceeding jealousy: and "*with him is terrible majesty*," Job xxxvii. 22.

What we know of the other persons of the Godhead, is only in their office-relations for the good of man. Christ eternally loved his seed, and resolved to rescue them from a fore-known fall. The Spirit became his helper in this work, in unison with the tenor and conditions of a mutual covenant. But still the Father must maintain his justice, till the merits of Christ's death are by the Spirit applied to the soul. Thus all men come into this world, under the curse of a broken law: and though the elect are delivered virtually by Christ's death from the curse, even before they were born, being from all eternity put into Christ, by the fore-knowledge and purpose of the Father; yet are they not actually delivered therefrom in their own persons, till the renewing power of the Holy Spirit is put forth upon them, leading them to embrace the blood and righteousness of Christ, and to take comfort in what he hath done and suffered for them. Now when the soul is brought into this happy state, its addresses are to God the Father, whose justice required satisfaction for all its sins.

1st. It admits the holiness and perfect justice of JEHOVAH: then it confesses its own transgressions, then it pleads earnestly for pardon; not because it doubteth of that pardon; for faith given leads it to believe God hath accepted it, and accepted it for ever: but faith leads it to beg that which is already given, in clearer discoveries and more supporting influence on itself.

Further, the imperfection that still cleaveth to the soul, is the source of frequent addresses, petitions, sighs, ejaculations, and prayers to the Father for the sake of his dear Son.—But this must suffice. Having therefore noticed the reason why the Father is more particularly addressed in prayer than the other divine persons, I hasten briefly to observe what things we can ask of the Father in the name of Christ with the hope of receiving, and these are,

1st. Pardon of all our sins. God's wrath is a terrible burthen for an afflicted conscience, which beholdeth the exceeding sinfulness of sin, the nature and requirements of God's holy law, and the holiness of God himself, who must in justice to himself enforce the requirements of that holy law. Now in regard to the different things which we can ask of God the Father in the name of Christ, with a hope of receiving, I would just premise once for all, who are to be understood by the word *we*. It must be understood of those and of those only, who are first by the power of the Spirit, renewed in heart, and are thus under divine teaching and divine im-

pressions: for the world at large know nothing of Christ: they believe not in him; they desire not to receive any thing from him, they make no supplication to the Father in the name and for the sake of Christ. Now *we* then, seeing the terrors of God's law, and how God hath been dishonored by our transgression, venture boldly to ask in the name of Christ, pardon of all our sins: may we hope to receive this pardon for the sake of Christ. Do we ask on what ground we expect pardon of sins in the name of Christ? It is, 1st. Because the blood of Christ is the appointed channel in which God hath been pleased to grant remission of sins. 2d. Because of Christ's infinite righteousness, from which the blood of Christ receives its inestimable value; and through which also its efficacy flows to the soul; for no sooner is sin washed away than a garment is given, the robe of Christ's righteousness, covering the soul, that it may stand beautifully arrayed in the presence of God. 3d. Because Christ intercedes for all those for whom he shed his blood, "*I have* "*manifested thy name to the men which thou* "*gavest me out of the world.—I pray for them,* "*I pray not for the world, but for them which* "*thou hast given me,*" John xvii. 6 and 9.

Now what greater comfort can the children of God have, than to think that whilst they are asking pardon of sins in the name of Christ, Christ himself is pleading for them; and for whom did Christ ever plead in vain? Surely for none. Now who

are the children of God? Not surely, those merely who choose to call upon him, though it be in the name of Christ; but those whom God the Father hath chosen in Christ, to call upon him, and to plead before him the merits of Christ's death and passion.

2d. A dread of sinning. For this we pray in the name of Christ. Christ giveth to his people a hatred of sin, as one of the blessings of his death, and one of the fruits of his Spirit. Now as his people are brought to the foot of the cross, and are made to see the evil by nature of their own hearts; so they feel the love of God shed abroad in their hearts? They feel also a natural hatred to Him, still continuing in principle, though not perhaps in degree; for the natural man will ever continue to hate God, though a habit of holiness induced by the spirit of grace, may continually abridge the power of sin in our mortal members: if then they behold these two contrary principles within them, what think they will be the event. Grace reigneth, but sin is not dead. Grace reigneth, but their hearts at times rebel. Grace reigneth, but evil thoughts arise; thoughts dishonorable to God, by which the soul is at times overwhelmed. And who can tell the blasphemous thoughts, that plague and vex a righteous man; arising at times from his own heart; arising from his heart, when he would wish it to be otherwise engaged; *viz.* in the worship and service of the Lord his God. How many a man of God hath struggled hard in the strength of the

Spirit, and come off well in these things; he hath then rejoiced and thought himself secure; but the Spirit's influence is anon withheld; and what now? The man is an easy prey to every tempting sin. Now when the light of the Spirit is again poured into the heart of such an one; what doth he feel and fear, hath been the cause of his sin? very often, that he did not enough dread and guard against the approach of sin. Now we ought in the name of Christ, to pray that we might dread sin. 1st. Because it is hateful to God; it is a thing which he cannot bear in his sight; he cannot look upon sin without the greatest abhorrence. 2d. Because it hath ruined all men in Adam, and will eventually and eternally ruin all, whom God is not pleased in his grace, to rescue from its influence. 3d. Because it hindereth even the saints themselves from enjoying constant communion with God. On this last point I would say the most. Sin first broke off the communion of Adam with God; and drove Adam from that delightful garden, where the * voice of the Lord God walked every day. It spoiled the handy-work of God: not that it was spoiled against the knowledge or consent of God; for God himself ordained the fall. He foreknew it from all eternity in all its consequences on the soul of man, and on that Creation which was his own approved handy-work. But he saw it fit to suspend that influence of his

* For this peculiar yet biblical expression, see what I have said before, page 6, and also Gen. iii. 8.

Spirit, by which he could have prevented the fall; yea, even to ordain the fall, for to manifest the riches of his grace in Christ Jesus, and for other most wise yet to us inscrutable reasons; reasons which from all eternity filled the divine mind, with a noble plan of executing a divine and immutable will, gradually to be unfolded through all periods of time. Now let the man of God ask himself, if sin does not often hinder intercourse with God; and keep him from enjoying moments of communion with him. Shall not then God's children ask of God's hand to have right views, and a godly fear of that accursed thing which he hateth, which hindereth his people, from enjoying that communion with him which they desire, and which to the true Christian, gives to every other enjoyment the only relish it possesses.

3d. God's people may ask of him in the name of Christ, to have a sense of their interest in Christ.

An interest in Christ is what all God's chosen must and do possess; from the nature of that immutable covenant with Christ, by which they are duly put into their living head. Now this covenant is from everlasting: it must therefore prove an everlasting relationship between God and his chosen, though that relationship can exist no where but in the mind of God, till the objects of it appear in the world by a creature-existence. Further, it may

be observed, a creature-existence, often long precedes a spiritual existence in God's own people. Some indeed are brought to the new-birth in early youth, some in riper manhood, and some when hoary hairs crown their head and old age steals away their strength. Yet whenever or however converted, they come into a relationship through Christ, distinct from, and far above the relationship of flesh and blood, in which latter sense only God is the common Father of all flesh. Yet even in the lips of God's chosen, this language may often be found, "*O that I knew where I might find him!*" Job xxiii. 3. Like the babe on the knee, they have a father, though they know him not; they have a father, but they cannot boldly call him father. Now this doubt and suspense is not confined to babes in Christ, but extends to young men, and even fathers. It arises from the remains of sin and unbelief, and even often from God's designed suspension of his good Spirit, to try the faith and patience of his saints. Yet what shall we do in this matter? Shall we feel no compunction on account of remaining sin and unbelief? Shall we feel no longings for a further refreshing from God's presence? "*The vision is yet for an appointed time, but at* "*the end it shall speak and not lie; though it* "*tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come,* "*it will not tarry. Behold his soul which is lifted* "*up, is not upright in him: but the just shall live*

"*by faith* *," Habb. ii. 3, 4. Now the vision is for an appointed time; God hath ordained how long he will hide his face, and leave us insensible of our interest in Christ; yet let us wait the Lord's coming; he that waits for his Lord, may often be seasonably refreshed by the presence of his Lord.

Now if we feel lifted up without Christ, or without a sense of interest in him, this is not uprightness in the sight of God, nor is it the spirit of a Christian, but in such seasons God's people live by faith. And though a lively faith must give more support than a weak one, and though a lively faith cannot long be maintained without a sense of interest in Christ, yet a little faith may hold the soul in its position, till God again reneweth his visit. Besides, a little faith may build up an "*Ebenezer, saying, "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us,*" 1 Sam. vii. 12. Now for such a sense of interest in Christ, how often did David pray! "*How long wilt thou "hide thy face from me,*" Psalm xiii. 1. "*Hide "not thy face,*" Psalm xxvii. 9. lxix. 17. cii. 2. cxliii. 7. Job also expostulateth thus, and saith

* I grant that the subjoining short explanation given to this passage, is not the literal and primary meaning, but doth not the passage allow it? And in the same sense I conceive, may every saint of God use our Lord's own words; "*Can the children of the "bride chamber fast, while the bridegroom is with them. But the "days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken away from "them, and then shall they fast in those days,*" Mark ii. 19.

"*Wherefore hidest thou thy face from me, and "holdest me for thine enemy,*" Job xiii. 24. Now then let us pray for God's face to shine upon us; his face is his Son, his face shining is a sense of interest in Christ. This he giveth to all his chosen, not for their prayers, though it is often withholden, that they may be led to see how little they can enjoy without it, and may be led to pray for it. And it is often given in answer to prayer, to God's chosen; for the sake of Jesus Christ.

4th. We may also pray to have a sense of the influence of God's Spirit.

The Spirit of God is the Creator of, and giver of life to all things. It is the giver of life to every living thing: and the giver of spiritual life to man. Now as this spiritual life draws a marked line of distinction, between the brute and man; so it draws near, and assimilates man to the image of God. In this image man was at first created, in a state of perfection, though under the liability and possibility of falling. In a state of perfection, that he might be like to God, and therefore be the object of delight to God: and under the liability and possibility of falling, that he might see and acknowledge continually his dependent condition, and might feel the necessity of divine grace continually to preserve him perfect before God. Hence it seemeth, that if man had never fallen, still it would have behoved him to have kept in his mind a sense of the influence of God's Spirit; as that only

whereby he could keep on in the right way. Now as the fall was eternally decreed of God, as a part of the designs of God's infinite wisdom, to manifest the riches of his grace in Christ Jesus; so also must the suspension of God's Spirit have been decreed also; for man could not fall whilst upheld by divine grace; nor could he remain long proof against temptation when that Spirit was withheld from him. Now when the Spirit was suspended, and our first parents were tempted, what did they do? Did they implore a sense of the influence of God's Spirit; or whilst they might feel it suspended, did they desire a renewed visitation of it? No: and this stupid indifference to a divine interference in their behalf, caused them more readily to fall in with the evil suggestions of Satan, to which they were left of God, because he had eternally decreed upon the suspension of the Spirit, as the decreed means of bringing about a pre-determined fall. But enough on this,—and now to speak more particularly of our case. We may pray for ourselves for a sense of the influence of the Spirit in Christ's name;

1st. That we may know that we are indeed born of the Spirit.

The Holy Spirit is a spirit of promise; it is promised, and in a measure given to all God's chosen. It is the Spirit of his own Son; and sent to all his adopted children, "*And because ye are sons, "God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son, into "your hearts, crying Abba, Father,*" Gal. iv. 6.

Now the sending forth of the Spirit of his Son is one thing; and our being enabled to call him "*Abba, Father,*" is another. Our ignorance of our relationship to the Father, doth not prove he is not a father: for no one can truly say an infant hath no father, because his tender years incapacitate him from knowing his father. So babes in Christ know not the Spirit, though they are born of the Spirit. Now what are the fruits of being born of the Spirit? a sense of a solid, permanent, immutable, and eternal interest in all the gifts, graces and effects of the Spirit, though our understanding cannot grasp them in their various workings through his divine power. Now various causes contribute to keep God's children, ignorant of the influence of the Spirit, and of their union to the Father, thereby; as first, being newly brought under the birth of the Spirit, not having the memory sanctified to God, so that we can remember the proofs of our adoption. Now a man possessing the title-deeds to an ample estate and princely domain, cannot always charge his memory with all the items in them on which his title is grounded: yet this gives not much pain; for a reference to the above, makes good his own claim, and destroys that of any other person. Now even in regard to men in Christ Jesus; the remains of inherent corruption, the force of long and continued habits before grace, the temptations of satan, the allurements of the world, the backslidings of heart, and reluctance to go forward in spiritual

things after; these keep God's people much ignorant, both of their interest in Christ, and of the influence of the Spirit in them. Yet it behoveth God's people to know that they are born again, to pray to know it, that they may take comfort in this, that if so born they are not of the seed of the serpent, but of the seed of Christ, and the children of God. We pray for this;

2d. That we may know that we are sanctified by the Spirit.

Sanctification as I have observed before, is a gradual work; and moreover a work that can never be perfected here below. For 1st, It is not ordained to be perfect here, seeing all God's people have their appointed temptations and trials whilst they continue in the body; and 2d. The state of imperfection in which we are, the sin yet dwelling in us, and all the deceitful lusts of the flesh, yea even the flesh itself, precludes the possibility of it. Yet sanctification is a work carried on of God's Spirit in the hearts of his people, whereby they are from time to time comforted and edified in their most holy faith. Now a lack of faith may lead a Christian at times to despair of going forward in his work; nay, may even lead him not rightly to consider, those attainments which he actually may have made. And although it becometh no Christian to esteem himself more highly than he ought; yet Satan delighteth to be an accuser of the brethren, by leading them unnecessarily to accuse themselves;

and this, by keeping them as much as he can, in ignorance of the state of their hearts before God.

The Christian knoweth and so doth satan, that the disposition of their hearts is not right before God. What then if he can persuade them, that their state is wrong also. What if he can grieve them, and vex them, by leading them to doubt the safety of their state, as to their interest in Christ, and their assistance from the Spirit. Now in such a state of temptation from satan, how doth it behove Christians to pray, not only for the influence of God's Spirit, but also for a sense of the same in their heart, that they may feel their safety to lay only in the assistance of God's Spirit. Now we may notice further in conjunction with this, that we may pray in the name of Christ, to possess a sense of eternal love holding us up, because that the Holy Spirit is given only to those of whom eternal love hath laid hold, in a way of sovereign choice. "*Underneath are the everlasting arms.*" Blessed doctrine! how can we escape what is everlasting? Hath God put everlasting arms under us? Now as being once there, where we can fly to escape their expanse; and as they embrace their own chosen objects, to the exclusion of all others, satan can never enter to pluck us from them.

5th. We may also pray to have more peace and joy in believing. Whatever any one possesseth, he desireth to possess in peace: and a man desireth to

believe those things, which can give him joy and peace in believing. Now natural things may give natural peace, even in those who love not God; though herein it will be distinguished from spiritual and true peace, that at the longest it can last only during our continuance in a nature-state, and may leave an awful blank or even a dreadful horror, when eternity dawns on the mind for ever.

Now spiritual things alone, can give spiritual peace; being like that author from whence they proceed, even from that divine Spirit, which Christ under the name of the Comforter, promised to send to his disciples. Hence to pray that we may have more peace and joy in believing, is the same as to pray to have a sense of the influence of the Spirit working in our hearts, performing that in us, which is well pleasing in God's sight. This may appear clearer, if we consider some of the offices of the Spirit which Christ declared he would be sent to perform, in the hearts of God's regenerate ones. And first, this Spirit was promised to put them in continual remembrance of Christ. "*But the com-*"*forter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Fa-*"*ther will send in my name, he shall teach you*"*all things, and bring all things to your remem-*"*brance, whatsoever I have said unto you,*" John xiv. 26. Now the words of Christ to his disciples, as spoken verbally, and to all his people, as written for their instruction through all ages; relate to his death and sufferings for them; to his resurrection

and ascension to glory, and his there ever making intercession for them; to his promise, to support them by his Spirit against all the oppositions and strivings of the world, the flesh and the devil: and to that of his raising them up at the last day to behold and share his everlasting glory. Now of these things God's people are frequently put in mind by this heavenly comforter. Now he applieth to the believer's hearts, a thought of the cross of Christ, so that such an one may exult and say, that his sins were crucified and washed away there; now a thought of the resurrection of Christ, so that the believer cries out in triumph, "*I know that my "Redeemer liveth,*" and hath a firm expectation, joyfully to rise and meet his Lord in the clouds of the air, and so to be for ever with his Lord; now a thought of the intercession of Christ, so that a throne of grace is sought with delight, and his prayers are offered and his petitions made in faith, on the complete merits, and sweet savor of the incense of Christ's intercession, and adorable righteousness; now the very Spirit which puts him in remembrance of these things, is remembered, and Christ is adored for so unspeakable a gift; a gift which is the earnest and foretaste of Heaven, and which keeps the believer's heart from those sins, which would spoil his relish for his foretasted Heaven. Now then the Christian prays for peace and joy in believing, all that the Spirit informs him, Christ hath declared for his consolation.

2d. The Spirit was promised to lead them into the way of all truth. "*The spirit of truth which* "*proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of* "*me: and ye also shall bear witness, because ye* "*have been with me from the beginning;*" John xv. 26, 27. Mark here a twofold effect of the spirit of truth; 1st. He shall testify to us, and 2d. Make us testify, or set our seals to the truth. When the Spirit testifies of Christ to any one, then he is called a sealing Spirit; for he doth not merely present an object to God's people, and leaves them to look at it or not, or rejoice in it or not, as they please, but he writes that truth in an indelible manner on their hearts: "*Ye* (says "St. Paul to the Corinthian saints) *are our* "*epistles written in our hearts, known and read* "*of all men. Forasmuch as ye are manifestly* "*declared to be the epistles of Christ, ministered* "*by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit* "*of the living God: not in tables of stone, but in* "*fleshy tables of the heart,*" 2 Cor. iii. 2, 3. Now the Spirit writes upon our hearts an account of the gracious offices of Christ for his people: yea moreover, says to every individual thus written upon, all these things were done for *thee*; done to purchase *thee* everlasting life. Now 2d. The Spirit maketh us testify that this is true: Christ declared, "*out* "*of the abundance of the heart, the mouth* "*speaketh.*" And so it is here. The Spirit fills the heart; a full heart must tell its fulness to a

friend: we then in the fulness of the Spirit go to tell our joys to God. We tell him, he hath sent forth his Son to die for us; we tell him his Son, hath accomplished his purpose; we tell him, the Spirit hath applied these truths to our souls. We tell him we feel something of their influence; and desire continually to feel more. O for such an heart continually to unbosom oneself to God. This is indeed to have more peace and joy in believing.

3d. The Spirit was promised to shew them things to come. What is to come? Something more great than the queen of Sheba saw, when she was witness to the splendor, riches and wisdom of Solomon; and declared, "*It was a true report that I "heard in mine own land, of thy acts, and of "thy wisdom. Howbeit, I believed not the words "until I came, and mine eyes had seen it; and "behold, the half was not told me, thy wisdom "and prosperity exceeded the fame which I heard,*" 1 Kings x. 6, 7. So we in this our land, given us in God's Providence for a dwelling place, till he shall please to take us home, have heard through the gospel, the acts and the wisdom of Christ. It is a true report, but by nature we believed not; and thus continued till the Spirit led us by the hand, brought us to Christ, opened the eyes of our benighted, faithless minds, and enabled us to see the mysteries of his kingdom. And now we can cry with the queen of Sheba, "*Behold the half was not*

"*told us:*" though God's people told us how Christ loved us; though his ministers often told us the sweetest truths; yet they made not half such impressions on our minds, as the touch of the Spirit hath made, nor came so happily home to suit our lost and ruined condition. We behold now the wisdom of Christ, we see how he prospers in his people; for whilst the world is tossed with cares, troubled with the stings of natural and unsanctified conscience, plunged into distress; we have a hiding place in the tempest and a covert from the storm. O for such joy and peace in believing. Lord we pray thee send it to thy people's souls, as thou lovest them, and hast chosen them in Christ Jesus.

6th. We may also pray in the name of Christ, for more submission to, or gratitude for our appointed lot.

"*The lot,* (says Solomon) *is cast into the lap;* "*but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord,*" Prov. xvi. 33. Now we are passive in the reception of blessings seeing they are cast into the lap, which implies first, That they are not ours till cast into our lap, and 2d. That we cannot reject them without slighting the giver. Now in regard to the first, What blessings allotted to us are ours before we receive them? Ours they may be it is true, as marked out for us in the decrees of God's providential counsels; but not ours in possession, till we actually receive them. Now gratitude presupposes a favor: for though a promise of thankfulness, may go be-

not belong to *any* covenant of works; consequently 3d. They were not promised to Adam in case of obedience: which may be seen, 4thly. By observing, that though without them, man could not continue in original uprightness, and if he did not so continue, he was threatened with the pains of hell for ever; yet still God was not pleased to grant them: but suffering all mankind to fall in their head Adam, was pleased afterwards to give them freely to those whom he had chosen in Christ Jesus. But on these I cannot here stop to enlarge. Now if in Providence we possess blessings of which we are utterly unworthy, what reason for gratitude in our appointed lot; further, if in a way of grace, we receive as free gifts, pardon of sins, justification by the righteousness of Christ and the merits of his blood, adoption into his family by the election of grace, manifestation of God's everlasting love to us through the witness of the Spirit, peace in our conscience here through believing, and a hope of endless joy at God's hand, to be assuredly given us in due time, notwithstanding all unworthiness; Oh! what calls for gratitude are these. Our lot is appointed in providence; and so it is in grace: for "*Known unto God are all his works "from the beginning*," Acts xv. 18. But if our blessings are appointed of God, so are our trial and temptations fixed of him.

And as these are sorely unwelcome to flesh and blood, so it is needful not only that we pray for

gratitude in blessings given, but for submission also, to our appointed trials here below. Now these trials are various in their kinds: as in temporal things, sickness, pain of body, losses, crosses, unfaithfulness of friends, cruelty of enemies, removal of relatives and dear connexions, &c. in spiritual things, unbelief and hardness of heart, as they remain in the regenerate, with all evil thoughts, wanderings of mind, doubts of our interest in Christ, ignorance of the workings of the Spirit, the snares of the world, the temptations of the devil, the infirmities and treachery of the flesh, the weakness of young disciples, the desertion of false brethren, doubts of our acceptance before God, disrelish of his word and worship, &c. these are appointed things to vex the Christian; appointed to try his faith, and exercise the graces of the Spirit in him. Now it well becomes the Christian to pray to be delivered from all these things. But seeing, that many pray long without being delivered (although they will be delivered at last) it behoveth God's people to pray for submission to these things; as a part of that cross which they are called to take up, to the denial of themselves, and the following of Christ. The language of a Christian under dark and trying dispensations is this; "*All the days of my appointed* "*time will I wait till my change come,*" Job xiv. 14. And if at any time these evils oppress, let us take the advice of the apostle Paul, "*Consider* "*him that endured such contradiction of sinners*

"*against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in* "*your minds,*" Heb. xii. 3. Now it is easy to say, 'let us do this or that,' but oh! when the trial comes, how faith wavers, how hope flags, how love grows cold. What shall we do? Oh, that we may be found praying for submission to God's will. "*Thy will be done,*" sweetened the bitterest cup our Saviour ever drank in his human nature; and it can sweeten ours: and it carries with it this comfort, that when God's will is done, and his end answered by the furnace, we shall come out like the three worthies of old, under the blessed attendance of the Son of God, without being scorched, or so much as the smell of the fire having passed upon us. Daniel iii. 25 and 27. Now in regard to the appointed lot which God bestows upon us; we cannot 2dly, reject them without slighting the giver. To reject a blessing given of God, is not to return it immediately as men often do the gifts of men: but not to shew gratitude to God for it, or not to use it for his glory: the same may even be said of adversity, if we bless not God in the trial, nor desire it may be blessed for our spiritual good, and for the glory of his great name; this is to reject the means of correction which God useth, to wean his people from the world and draw them to himself. May we pray in the name of Christ against this.

7th. We may also pray for God's ministers, and for his church. But first of his ministers. Many

preach before they are sent. Many are not scripturally sent to preach the gospel. It is not the imposition of hands by a fellow worm, that fits a man to preach the gospel; but the descent of the Spirit, and its divine unction flowing into the heart. It is the Spirit's work to raise up men to minister the word. "*The Holy Ghost* (in old times) *said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul, for the work whereunto I had called them,*" Acts xiii. 2. To speak then of such ministers as are sent by the Holy Ghost:

1st. We pray for to see their ministry established among us.

Ministers are plentiful in the present day; but not such ministers as preach the gospel in its consistency, reality, simplicity and truth. The false charity of the present day, leads many equally to prize the preaching of ministers of every denomination; but the priests of Baal, must not be regarded as the prophets of God. And what hath followed, where it has: doctrines have been confounded, till gospel doctrine hath been nearly lost. Hence hypocrites abound in all churches, and God's little flock, are ofttimes ignorant of the voice of their shepherd. Yet do we love the simplicity of truth; let us pray for a pure ministry to be among us. Of this I feel confident, where God hath a people to bring forward, there his word shall find them out, for if a pure ministry is not sent to con-

vert sinners, surely it is often sent to strengthen God's little ones.— But

2d. We pray for the fulness of the Spirit to rest upon them.

If it be true that out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh, so it needeth to be the case of ministers. Ministerial labors are arduous, and require a double portion of God's Spirit to uphold and continue them in a profitable way. "*Give "us bread* (said Israel to Moses) *or else we die.*" So we look up to our ministers for bread. But they must be supplied: for they are not the bread of life, but only the breakers of it to God's people. Now ministers should lay near our hearts. We should carry them in faith to a throne of grace, and there beg of God to supply them, that we may receive from them a portion of meat in due season.

3d. We pray that their ministry may be blessed to our souls.

A praying frame is a proper frame in which to go to the house of God. A praying frame is a proper frame in which to sit in the house of God. God's language is, "*Open thy mouth wide and I "will fill it,*" Psalm lxxxi. 10. And where should our mouths be most open, and our hearts most receptive of divine truth, than where that truth is most freely dealt out for God's people. To our complaints before God this may often be added, 'Lord 'how little we profit by the pure ministry of thy

'Word.' May we add also, 'Lord help us to 'profit more.'

But I observed also, that we were called upon to pray for God's church.

Here much might be said: for I have a feeling heart for all the members of Christ's mystical body here below: but seeing I am exceeding all bounds as to the subjects for prayer (which indeed are in themselves boundless) I would confine myself at present to two, mentioned together by the prophet Isaiah, in his breathings for the prosperity of Zion. Thus he prays: "*Lengthen thy cords, strengthen* "*thy stakes,*" Isaiah liv. 2.

1st. Lengthen thy cords. The gates of Zion are not so extended as they shall be. Numerous prophecies might be quoted which speak of a further enlargement of Christ's kingdom: for 1st. The fulness of the Gentiles is not called in; and 2d. All Israel is not saved, by the Jews being brought in to receive the gospel. Both these things are anticipated with joy by prophets and apostles, and holy men. Isaiah rejoices; "*Sing O barren* (even ye "Gentiles) *thou that didst not bear;—for more* "*are the children of the desolate,* (Gentiles) *than* "*the children of the married wife,* (the Jews) "*saith the Lord,*" Isaiah liv. 1. which Paul quotes, Gal. iv. 27. And the same apostle elsewhere calls the recovery of the Jews, life from the dead. "*Now* "*if the fall of them* (the Jews) *be the riches of*

"*the world; and the diminishing of them the* "*riches of the Gentiles; how much more their* "*fulness? For I speak to you Gentiles. If by* "*any means I may provoke to emulation them* "*which are my flesh,* (even the Jews) *and might* "*save some. For if the casting away of them be* "*the reconciling of the world, what shall the re-* "*ceiving of them be, but life from the dead,*" Rom. xi. 12 to 15. Now let us have the lengthening of the cords of Zion at heart; let us say with the prophet of old, "*O Lord revive thy work in* "*the midst of the years, in the midst of the years* "*make known; in wrath remember mercy,*" Hab. iii. 2. But this we must pray for according to the analogy of faith, and in consistency with the sovereign grace of that God, who will have mercy upon whom he will have mercy.

2d. Strengthen thy stakes. The people of God are by nature a weak people; so much so, that they are compared to sheep in many parts of scripture. Now however sheep may know the voice of the shepherd, yet they are affrighted at the voice of a stranger and unresistingly flee from him. "*The wolf* (saith Christ) *catcheth them and scat-* "*tereth the sheep,*" John x. 12. And were it not that Christ is able, and also determined to rescue his sheep from the jaws of the wolf, they would be devoured; but blessed be God, Christ is engaged by covenant-oaths to deliver them. And not only this, but God also often chooseth his

the weakest and most contemptible of the world: thus he chose Israel of old. "*The Lord* (says "Moses) *did not set his love upon you, nor choose* "*you, because ye were more in number than any* "*people, for ye were the fewest of all people,*" Deut. vii. 7. And to the like purpose speaks the apostle Paul, in 1 Cor. i. 27, 28. Now the people of God are compared to many things in his word: as to a city or fortified place; fortified not by their own strength, but by the strength of the Lord of Hosts: for "*Except the Lord build the house,* "*they labour in vain, that build it; except the* "*Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in* "*vain,*" Psm. cxxvii. 1. Now their situation is agreeable to things in nature. Stakes have no strength in themselves to oppose a coming army, but when skilfully driven into the ground by the hands of engineers, when backed by a line of artillery, and surrounded on the outside by a deep fosse, they present a formidable barrier against the approaches of an enemy. So the people of God when skillfully arranged by the hand of God, backed by the thunders of Almighty power, and defended by all the artillery of the Lord that mighty man of war, Exod. xv. 3; hedged round about, as Job was hedged in of the Lord. Job i. Above all, defended by the sword of the Spirit in the hands of the captain of their salvation, present a formidable barrier against the enemies of God.

But not only doth Satan attack God's people as

a collective body, but also individually. Every stake doth he try to pull up, if so be he may gain admittance into the fortress. But they are safe in Christ, who hath declared, "*Neither shall any "man pluck them out of my hand,*" John x. 28. But many of God's weak people know not, nor at all times consider how much they are in the hands of Christ, or how safe they are there: hence what fears, doubts, suspicions, and anxiety of Spirit; and here even the hearts of God's strong ones often fail them; yet for this we pray, that all God's people may know how much the Lord protecteth them, and how much his honor is concerned, and his loving heart determined, not to give up any of his seed to the hands of Satan to perish for ever.

8th. We may also pray in the name of Christ for a closer walk with God here below.

Walking with God, is a scripture phrase, and has in scripture a peculiar commendation from Heaven. By its eminent display in an antidiluvian patriarch, that patriarch was translated to Heaven. But let us mark how his walking with God, procured him the favor of God, exempted him from death, and procured him a translation to Heaven. His walking with God was not the meritorious cause, but faith laying hold of the merits of Christ, enabled him to bear that fruit which was well pleasing to God, which received the title of walking with God; for "*By faith* (says Paul) *Enoch was translated "that he should not see death; and was not found*

"because God had translated him; for before his "translation, he had this testimony, that he "pleased God. But without faith it is impos- "sible to please him," Heb. xi. 5, 6. Now the same which Enoch hath done, doth faith enable us also to perform, and though we look for no miracle to translate us to Heaven; yet it is a miracle to us that we shall ever reach it, except on the consideration that God hath determined to save his people, and hath infinite power to accomplish his purpose. Now a closer walk with God here below, is productive of two most blessed effects; as

1st. It brings glory to God, and to Christ, in whose faith we desire to walk.

The glory of God is the first object which God had in view, both in the counsels of eternity, and in the accomplishing those councils by his dealings in all ages. Now the wicked continually blaspheme God and wait for the halting of his people; they wish to see that accomplished, which Moses feared, when he cried out unto God, upon the anger of God being set to destroy Israel; *"Now if "thou shalt kill all this people as one man, then "the nations which have heard the fame of thee, "will speak, saying, Because the Lord was not "able to bring this people into the land which he "sware unto them, therefore hath he slain them in "the wilderness,"* Numb. xiv. 15, 16. Now as God is engaged by covenant with the Son to save all that are led to trust in him, so his people's

walking closely with him, doth mightily disappoint the expectation of those who wait for their halting, that they may blaspheme, and when God's people see how the expectations of their enemies are disappointed, it causeth them more abundantly to magnify sustaining grace, and to give glory to God. Now it brings also great glory to Christ: for Christ is the way in which true faith loveth to walk in all holy obedience.

2d. It tends to give God's people great joy and peace in believing.

When the husbandman soweth, he hopeth to reap. The Christian also hath the promise to reap, if he faint not. Many are the evils which make up the appointed lot of a Christian here below. Now a close walk with God, gives him to see an end in all those evils, and a blessed fruit arising from them: for "*He that goeth forth and weepeth, bear-*" *ing precious seed, shall doubtless come again* "*with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him,*" Psalm. cxxvi. 6. Doth the world know any thing of a godly sorrow, producing fruit unto life everlasting? By no means. It is the privilege of Christians: it is their privilege to pray for it. It is their privilege to have it in answer to those prayers which rise up in faith on the sufferings of the cross. Now this closer walk with God here below, is productive of another blessed effect, which is another worthy subject of our prayers; *viz.*

9th. We may pray for a brighter prospect of being with God hereafter.

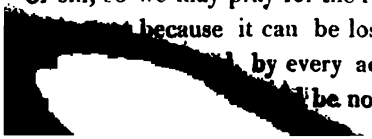
Death is a solemn thing even when contemplated in its mildest forms.

Doth a man form prospects, schemes and plans for future years? Death stares him in the face, and stops him with repeated warnings of its approach. It blasts his prospects, counteracts his schemes, overturns his plans, and strikes him with awe at the thoughts of dissolution. Doth even the good man lay plans for more glorifying God, and doing more general good; death speaks that time may not be granted; nay, sometimes comes and takes its planning victim. But the righteous hath hope in death. If the wicked contemplate God with any awe of his moral excellencies, they tremble, and either believe or desire that there be no future being. But God's people hope. O blessed hope; full of immortality and eternal life. This animates their addresses at his throne, sooths their sorrows, comforts their hearts, and smooths the rugged path of life in which they tread.

Lastly, We may pray in the name of Christ for the realising of that bright prospect for ever and ever.

What God hath given through the covenant of grace in Christ Jesus, is irreversibly given to all Christ's seed. Yet the remains of sin in God's people, often make faith to waver, hope to [illegible]

its head, and joy to hang its harp upon the willows; and if renewed visitations of God's Spirit, did not retouch their expiring graces, the sun of their peace would soon set for ever. But this, God graciously doth in the hearts of his people. Now if the irreversibility of God's gifts to his people, be considered, what joy for those who feel within a wicked heart. O blessed truth, I rest upon it. It is the joy and rejoicing of my sinful soul: hear it stated: "*For this is the covenant* "*that I will make with the house of Israel after* "*those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws* "*into their mind, and write them in their hearts;* "*and I will be to them a God, and they shall be* "*to me a people. And they shall not teach every* "*man his neighbour, and every man his brother,* "*saying, Know the Lord; for all shall know me,* "*from the least to the greatest. For I will be* "*merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins* "*and their iniquities will I remember no more,*" Heb. viii. 10, 11, 12. Now if our sins and iniquities are to be remembered no more, we have every ground to expect the realising of the prospect of being with God for ever and ever. Yet as I observed just before, seeing that faith and other divine graces do often droop because of the remains of sin, so we may pray for the realising of this pros-



because it can be lost and regained, for-

by every act of sin, or of holi-

be not safe till death, and

if after a Christian's toil, his last act was an act of sin, he must experience the pains of hell for ever; but what is given of God is irreversibly given, as observed before, settled eternally, so that our prayers cannot bring it to us); but we pray for the realising of it, that we through the Spirit, may pray down unbelief, and all the works of darkness striving in us: believing that if God hath given a little light, it is the earnest of an eternal day; a little liberty: it is the foretaste of perfect freedom: a little peace; it is the dawning of those pleasures which are at his own right hand for evermore.

21st. Verily, verily, I say unto you, That ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice; and ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy. John xvi. 20.

Sorrow has in it something uncongenial to the mind of man. In a state of innocence it must be so: for sin is the only source of sorrow, whether in man or fallen angels. When Adam beheld the face of his God walking among the trees of the garden, and beheld it in the conscious integrity of his own heart, what could he feel of sorrow, either of body or mind? Sorrow is a curse entailed both upon Adam and Eve. "*Unto the woman he said, I will "greatly multiply thy sorrow, and thy concep- "tion; in sorrow shalt thou bring forth children. "And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast "hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast "eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee,*

"*saying, Thou shalt not eat of it; cursed is the* "*ground for thy sake, in sorrow shalt thou eat of* "*it all the days of thy life,*" Gen. iii. 16, 17. Now a few words shall be spoken of sorrow as a curse, before I speak of a Christian's sorrow and his happy deliverance therefrom.

Sorrow sent as a curse must heighten sorrow: and none but those who are callous in unbelief and hardness of heart, but must feel their sorrow heightened by the curse that attends it. Take for instance, sickness and bodily pain; the mind feels the sore; the spirits sink under the anguish of the body. This is sorrow: but the mind reflects: this sorrow it says, is the fruit of my sin. This is redoubled sorrow; the curse of sin and the knowledge thereof.

Now of sorrow as a curse, these two things may be briefly spoken. It is, 1st. Entailed upon all our first parent's descendants; and 2d. On the ground, and on all its productions. 1st. Upon all their descendants. Now as the woman was first in the transgression, so this part of the curse more particularly falls on man, through Eve. And be it observed also that by this means, no one of the human race can escape its influence; "*in sorrow thou* "*shalt bring forth children.*" Now if this sorrow was the fruit of sin, and Eve was then a sinful as well as sorrowful woman, it follows that all her offspring must be brought forth in sin, as well as in sorrow: for how can the same effect be produced

without the same cause. O the boasted purity and innocence of a new-born child! Where is it? Could it be, it would be a prodigy in nature, at which all nature would surely stand astonished. Now the blood being once tainted, must always remain tainted as long as it flows in the same channel: just as the filthy waters of a city, running through its streets and lanes are not purified, till they mingle with the wholesome waters of a neighbouring stream. Like produces like as we may see in Creation. The lion is a lion still, however many removes he may be from the first lion which existed in this world. The seed of the woman is under the wrath of God, and subjected to the malice and rage of the devil, however far any of that seed may be removed in order of time from the first woman. I feel however this is sufficient, to shew the scripture view of entailed sin and sorrow. I turn over but the first leaf in my Bible, and in the second, I see it confessed in all its aggravating circumstances, and in consequences justly alarming. I therefore pass on to observe,

2d. This curse is entailed on the ground, and on all its productions.

Eve's sin introduced the curse into the world; but Adam's compliance, and fall into the same sin, sealed the curse upon all Creation: and this in a twofold way. 1st. It sealed it upon all rational beings; sealed it I say and not introduced it; for Eve's transgression so introduced sin, that it only

hung suspended over the world; and had it been possible for Adam to have stood, whilst Eve fell, the curse would most probably have fallen upon Eve only, but Adam and all mankind had stood secure. But that God who decreed the fall of Eve, decreed that Adam also should fall; and I know not into what to resolve the fall of either, but into the divine permission, working through the fall those counsels of grace, which were planned and resolved on in an eternal covenant. Now the fall of Adam sealed the curse in two ways; first, by both parents being involved in the fall, and consequently no part of the human race being exempt; thus the blood became wholly tainted; and the effects of natural generation were to produce scions like the parent tree. 2d. By Adam's being the federal head and not Eve. Adam was the creature of God's glory: Eve was but an help-meet for him. Adam had all creatures under command, so had not Eve; Adam had also a command to till the garden of Eden, before Eve was formed from him. And even to Adam was the punishment of disobedience declared, before Eve was formed. Now all these things made Adam's crime great indeed, for he was Lord of all below; he had the sole management of the garden given him by God: the curse was revealed to him when alone; and if the curse was made known before Eve was formed, it behoved him at all events to have given religious instruction to Eve, and even if she would disobey, to have endeavoured to have stood

in his own integrity: endeavoured I say; for Adam assaulted on all sides, could not stand through *endeavours* without God's Spirit; and as God's Spirit was not promised to help Adam in creature-perfection; nay, as it could not be given till a far better covenant than that of works, even a covenant of grace began to be revealed, so Adam could not stand; and this I say without impeaching the divine proceedings; for God had a right to do what he would with his own. 2d. The sin of Adam sealed the curse upon all the rest of the Creation. What strange animosities disturb the creatures of the brute creation. Now these surely are the effect of the fall. But the ground is cursed: and on this I intend a little to dwell. The ground may here imply a substance to be operated upon by the art and labor of man.

The labor of man then, must imply, the exertion of human means to some desirable end. The labour of men in primeval ages was indicative of the degree of cultivation in which they put their minds; I may go further, of the exercise of their thought in a proper or improper manner on the being and perfections of a God. Witness the choice, Cain and Abel made of the occupations of life, and the respect God had to the fruits of those occupations. Now the ground may imply the mind of man, to be cultivated by himself, by means which he employs to gain some end. Observe, man before the fall was called under the visible cultivation of Eden, to

till his mind. As long as he did this as God commanded, he fulfilled the requirements made upon creature-obedience. But a single act of rebellion disables man from cultivating the garden, or his own mind in an acceptable way: he is visibly dispossessed of Eden; and inwardly stripped of those powers of mind, under which, once obedience was enjoined him. Weak and wicked by the fall, he must do something. He labors, but not on a garden of Eden, nor on a perfect mind; but in a wilderness bringing forth thorns and thistles, and on a heart the seat of all iniquity. He labors in his own strength, by the sweat of his brow; he toils in earnest thought to recultivate his mind, and to present a fairer prospect within, to the eyes of his Maker. O Adam! a righteousness was near better than thine own, or God had frowned thee to hell, for thy impious working: a bleeding victim typifies thy bleeding Lord; the coat of a slain creature, covers thy now deformed body, and points thee to the perfect righteousness of thy immaculate Savior.

The sweat of thy brow, cannot purchase thee again the beauty of thy soul, or the peace of thy conscience: another than thee deigns to work for thee with more agonizing toil in a garden; and sweats drops of blood, from off his sacred head, to wash thy foulest stains of guilt away.

But having thus far spoken of sorrow in general, as a curse entailed upon man, I hasten to observe

the nature of a Christian's sorrow and his happy deliverance therefrom.

Sorrow is the effect of sin. And under it, the soul in a state of nature's darkness, sinks into most awful despair: as witness Cain, when pressed down by the weight of a sentence which thundered the vengeance of that just and holy law, which his transgression had broken.

Now a man may feel the curse and never have it removed; as it may fairly be presumed was the case with Cain.

But there is another sorrow which is not produced as a curse for sin. This sorrow also must have a cause. The first sorrow arises from the curse of the first Adam. The second sorrow is a blessed fruit of that regeneration-life, which every true Christian experiences from the grace of the second Adam, the Lord from Heaven. Now this sorrow must pre-suppose several things, as 1st. The influence of the Spirit in the work of regeneration. This alone can work the amazing change upon a sinner's heart, whereby he is turned from Satan unto God. In this change the Spirit works upon all the powers of the human mind. The understanding, over which worse than chaotic darkness reigns by nature, is enlightened; good is set before the man, and a desire of receiving it imparted. The will, that perverse, rebellious and stubborn enemy in a man's fallen nature, to all good, is brought to bow

in cheerful obedience to the offices of the Spirit; whilst the affections, which naturally love the creature more than the Creator, and delight most in things earthly, sensual and devilish, are stolen for God, and taught to delight in him as their chief good. Now when the Holy Spirit enlightens the understanding, a man sorrows over his own folly and wonders that he should have so long loved darkness rather than light; nor does he know how to account for this his strange conduct, except in the same way in which scripture hath accounted for it, *viz.*

BECAUSE HIS DEEDS WERE EVIL.

When that same Spirit bends the will, a man wonders that he has so long stood out in open rebellion against God, and that in so obstinate a manner, that nothing but the invincible grace of a God put forth in the sovereign energy of the Spirit, could bring him to submit willingly to God's righteous and gracious government over him. He wonders at this obstinate and obdurate conduct, and for this also he cannot account, but in the words of God to sinners, now brought home to him by the Spirit, *viz.*

THY NECK IS AN IRON-SINEW, AND THY BROW BRASS; Isaiah xlviii. 4.

Again, when the Spirit brings back the affections to God, a man is astonished his love should

have so wandered upon all earthly things. Finding delight in the same, whilst God is forgotten, and all his Maker's attributes and perfections have no loveliness in his eyes; yet he reads and believes the word of God, *viz.*

THE CARNAL MIND IS ENMITY AGAINST GOD.

Now for these things, sorrow is kindled in the heart of man, when regeneration begins its work in the soul of man.

Now this sorrow must pre-suppose,

2dly. Conversion under the influence of the Spirit. Conversion is the work of the heart, under the Spirit, turning to God, when he hath turned in the bowels of his rich grace towards us. "*Surely* (says "Ephraim) *after I was turned, I repented; and* "*after I was instructed, I smote upon my thigh*; "*I was ashamed, yea, even confounded, because* "*I did bear the reproach of my youth,*" Jer. xxxi. 19. Mark the pre-requisite to genuine repentance, conversion, and the enlightening of the understanding. Will any ask what sign of sorrow is there in smiting the thigh? for a solution of this question, I must return to patriarchal custom, adopted as early as the times of Abraham.

When Abraham wanted a wife for his son Isaac, and wished also to have a woman that feared God, he from his own age, entrusted this important thing to the hands of a faithful, and most probably, God-

fearing servant, and as a greater inducement he made him swear; and said to him, "*Put, I pray thee, "thine hand under my thigh. And I will make "thee swear by the Lord, the God of Heaven, and "the God of the earth, that thou shalt not take "a wife unto my son of the daughters of the Ca- "naanites, among whom I dwell. And the ser- "vant put his hand under the thigh of Abraham "his master, and sware to him concerning that "matter,*" Gen. xxiv. 2, 3, and 9. Thus the putting the hand under the thigh, was intended to confirm an oath. So Ephraim also meant it. But further, why thigh, in preference to any other part of the body? I return again to the time of Abraham. Abraham and all his house had lately been circumcised, by the express command of God; and this circumcision was a sign or seal of the covenant. Now it may be observed, that in all oaths in ancient days, some reference was made to religion, that so men might be led to adhere solemnly to the tenor of their oaths. Now the oath of Abraham hath thus respect to the right of circumcision: and his servant as a confirmation on his part of the oath, was enjoined to touch the part so circumcised, as a proof of his faith in the covenant. And as it would have been an indelicate exposure of the part circumcised, that Abraham should have openly exposed himself to the view of his servant, it is most probable that Abraham's servant coming before his master, reached his hand over the hinder

part of his master's thigh, thus touching the part which had experienced circumcision. This remark I have met with in the course of my late reading, but not being able to remember in whom I have seen it, I am forced unwillingly to tell the tale myself. But to return to Ephraim,—"More es- "pecially, (says the celebrated Witsius,) these three "principal heads of the whole of our religion are "held forth by the figure of circumcision; namely, "our *misery*, our *redemption*, and our *returns of* "*gratitude*. Man's *misery*, consists partly in *sin*, "partly in the *punishment*. But these are signi- "fied by circumcision." Thus we might observe, did Ephraim touch the part of circumcision, after the manner explained of Abraham's servant, to "denote (as Witsius further observes) that vicious- "ness or corruption of the whole man, inherent in "him from his very first origin, and frequently in "scripture, called the foreskin of the heart, or an "uncircumcised heart. Deut. x. 16. Jer. iv. 4. "Lev. xxvi. 41. Jer. ix. 26. And the painful "cutting away of that fleshy part signified, that the "whole man deserved to be separated for ever from "the communion of God and all saints, with ex- "quisite and intolerable torments both of soul and "body." And this, Ephraim more particularly as being a Jew might consider. "Here the *Re-* "*deemer* and the *Redemption* of men, are no less "clearly discovered:" and so might Ephraim discover them, as I think may be gathered from Jer.

xxxi. 18. where Ephraim says, "*Thou art the* "*Lord my God.*" "Lastly (says Witsius) by the "use of this sacrament they were put in mind of "the duties of a becoming gratitude." So most probably was Ephraim, by the language held out. Witsius's Œcon. Fœd. Vol. II. chap. viii. pages 252 to 254. Now all this I trust confirms the supposition, that conversion as a work of the Spirit precedes sorrow or repentance for sin.

3d. This sorrow pre-supposes some degree of faith.

All Christian graces grow at the foot of Christ's cross. The Spirit of God gives life to the soul, but the blood of Christ must water it too. And it may be observed, the energy of the Spirit follows the traces of the sprinkling of blood. As the destroying angel abstained from visiting with death, those souls whose houses were sprinkled with blood, so the Spirit comes to give life to those souls to whom Christ deigns to apply the merits of his blood. Now this idea seems to plead strongly within me for the doctrine, that Christ shed his blood only for the elect: for without now contending that if Christ died for all, none can even in justice experience the pains of hell in their own persons for ever; I think this is evident, that if Christ died for all, all do merit through him, the renewing influence of the Spirit; and where this is withheld, Christ would be the minister of sin, or the Holy Spirit worthy of blame. But this is blasphemy both against Christ

and the Holy Spirit. But in the covenant, God eternally chooses his objects in Christ Jesus, without any condition, pre-requisite or merit on their parts, and notwithstanding the hatefulness of their transgressions, Christ pledges himself to die for these; and in due time, did die for these, and for these *only*. And to these *only*, he promised his Spirit to follow his blood, to the renewal of the hearts of God's chosen. Now the time of the spiritual birth of the elect, being resolved upon by God in the eternal decrees of Heaven; down cometh the Spirit at the time appointed, to open the eyes of such and shew them the supreme efficacy of the cross, to instruct them, that that bleeding spectacle, there hanging between Heaven and earth, shed his blood for them. Now this is seen by throwing light into the understanding; it is comprehended and received by faith being instilled into the mind, through the operations of God the Spirit.

Now here sorrow gushes from every pore of the heart: faith asks was this for me? The heart replies, Here let me weep, for me my Lord has died. Now I would put this question to all the opposers of particular redemption: Why do you love Christ? Because he died for all mankind. But why need you love him for that, seeing he seemeth to have done no more for you than he has for others? Because I hope to be saved by his death. Now this is at best but a very general love to Christ. I con-

fess I love him because I feel he hath died for me: for *me* whilst thousands die around me, for whom he never deigned to shed his blood. Is this a cause for gratitude? Doubtless it is—for unceasing gratitude and highest praise, to feel myself a most miserable and most sinful wretch included in the arms of sovereign grace and undeserved mercy, whilst many who have made a fairer shew in the flesh, are left to perish, unregarded by him: oh, I must feel this in a particular way: here I melt in sorrow, to think my sins crucified my Lord; here I rise in rapture; that though through my sins he was given up to be crucified through the determinate counsel of God, yet his very blood doth cleanse those sins away. Some will say, this is presumption, and ask me who made me so wise in regard to such particular interest in Christ Jesus; but I answer, "*Hereby we know that he abideth "in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us,*" 1 John iii. 24. for "*If any man have not the Spirit "of Christ he is none of his,*" Rom. viii. 9.

Now in regard to the nature of a Christian's sorrow: it is like his joy—a something which the world meddleth not with. The world exalteth itself, and careth not that the Lord of life and glory suffered a bleeding sacrifice on account of transgression. But a Christian, a true disciple of Christ, cries with holy Job, "*I abhor myself, and repent "in dust and ashes,*" Job xlii. 6. He bleeds at the sight of a bleeding Lord. He mourns at the

thoughts of what Christ suffered for him and such hell-deserving sinners, from the cradle to the cross.

Further, this sorrow is not a trifling or momentary thing. Regeneration begins it: death only ends it. Daily sins require a daily sorrow. A body of sin and death, is a daily cross. Imperfection in Christian graces, short comings in duty, relapses to sin, which would be fatal, but for the renewals, revivals, and revisitations of the Holy Spirit, these give a Christian continual sorrow, from which he is only relieved by frequent approaches to that cross, where Christ agonized and bled for his sins, and bore both the sins and sorrows of all his chosen. Now whilst a Christian sorrows thus, even Christ declares the world shall rejoice. And so it is, as facts prove every day. But it has its reward; it has it now; and eternity itself will rather take away what it now has, than give it more. But how will this end? Will things remain so for ever? If we Christians be thus now, and had no better hope beyond the grave, we should be of all men most miserable. But blessed be God we have. Christ hath given us it, in his own words: "*Your sorrow shall be turned into joy.*" Now joy in some measure is a Christian's lot here below. But joy in perfection, consummation and eternity, is reserved for the immediate presence and full fruition of God. Everlasting joy is in contrast with all the temptations, trials, losses, crosses of this mor-

tal state. Christ in his man-nature partook of all the sorrows of mankind; yea, he drunk the cup to the very dregs. And if this is the case, shall we refuse to taste of the same; nay rather, we should stay by our Lord, through good report and evil report, esteeming it an honor to partake of his sorrow, that so we may partake of eternal joy. And let it be recollected also, that however intense a Christian's sufferings may be, they bear no comparison to the sufferings of our Lord. Who of us could bear to be blindfolded and buffetted like our Lord? who of us could bear to be tortured with a piercing crown of thorns, like our Lord? Who of us could have sustained that dreadful agony and bloody sweat in the garden; which was so intense, that even Christ in his human nature, needed the support of an angel from his heavenly Father? The apostle Paul calling us to "*Consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself;*" adds, "*Ye have not resisted unto blood, striving against sin,*" Heb. xii. 3, 4. But Christ surely resisted unto blood, the devil and all his works, striving against sin, and conquering it for all his chosen. Now through the riches of his grace, our sorrow, who truly believe upon him, shall end in eternal joy. "*Our light affliction,* (says St. Paul), *which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory,*" 2 Cor. iv. 17. And this our affliction worketh not our salvation meritoriously; (for

Christ's sufferings are alone satisfactory for his people) but efficiently, as a blessed means in the hand of God of accomplishing his designs. Sanctified affliction, hath with it all the accompaniments of the Spirit of God; as a deep sense of unworthiness, and of hell-deserving as a reward of transgression, faith on Christ, beholding him sustaining the curse of the law in our stead, love to God for sending his Son, dependance on the Spirit to help us through the furnace for Christ's sake, and prayer to God under the influence of the Spirit, that our affliction, however long, tedious, painful, galling to the flesh, or oppressive to the man of sin remaining within us, may end in God's due time, to the glory of his name, and the refining of our own souls: now of such Christ saith, "*They shall walk* "*with me in white, for they are worthy,*" Rev. iii. 4. And again, "*These are they which follow* "*the Lamb, whithersoever he goeth,*" Rev. xiv. 4. And again, "*God shall wipe away all tears from* "*their eyes: and there shall be no more death,* "*neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be* "*any more pain,*" Rev. xxi. 4. And again, "*Blessed are they that do his commandments, that* "*they may have right to the tree of life, and may* "*enter in through the gates into the city,*" Rev. xxii. 14.

22d. Verily, verily, I say unto thee, When thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldst, but when thou art old, thou shalt

stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldst not. Thus spake he, signifying by what death he should glorify God. John xxi. 18, 19.

The speaker of these words is that divine and adorable personage, whose words while here below, I have endeavoured through this Essay, to comment upon, according to the little light given unto me. During a life of unparalleled sorrows and sufferings, which he had voluntarily undertaken in consequence of an eternal covenant, made by his own consent, with the Father and the divine Spirit in the settlements of eternal and sovereign grace; and which he undertook for that precious remnant whom God had elected and ordained to eternal life; during such a life, Christ spake as never man spake. Yet his words were not esteemed and received faithfully by all. Divine truth was his darling theme: while he revealed the grace and glory of his eternal Father, to all whom he loved.

Many rejected him: and why? Because he pourtrayed the depraved nature of man in its blackest colours. Yet this was not all: as he declared that he came not to condemn the world, but that the world through him should be saved: so the gospel was his topic, and whilst he came to fulfill the law, he shewed, how unable man was to fulfill the law, that man might be led to look to him as the law-fulfiller, in the stead of his people.

The person here spoken to by our Lord, claims also our attention. It is Peter; a zealous, a warm and faithful friend of our Lord. Yet who once (oh the frailties, yea horrible sins of God's chosen, when under the suspensions of his Spirit), who once denied his Lord, and with bitter oaths and curses repeated the same; yet restored from this fall, by a gracious healing look from his Lord. Behold him borrow over his fall: whilst the Spirit of God raised him from that fall into which he was plunged, and renewed his weeping heart to more joy in, love to, and boldness in the cause of his beloved Lord.

Yet as this man had fallen, his faith must be tried, and his love be questioned in a way which nothing but faith and love could approve. "*Simon son of* "*Jonas*, (says Christ) *lovest thou me more than* "*these?*" hard question this, for one who had denied his master with oaths and curses. "*He saith* "*unto him, Yea Lord, thou knowest that I love* "*thee,—He saith to him again the second time,* "*Simon son of Jonas, lovest thou me? He saith* "*unto him, Yea Lord.*"

But thrice Peter had denied his Lord with oaths and curses; thrice must he be questioned, as to his present love; "*He saith unto him the third time,* "*Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter* "*was grieved because he said unto the third time,* "*lovest thou me?*" Oh the shortness and imper-

fection of a Christian's grace! oh the little patience of the saints. Peter is grieved, that the love of his treacherous heart should be questioned. O what Peters we all are, denying our Lord, and then wondering our faith and love should be called in question! But though it grieved Peter, it damped not the flame of holy affection kindled within him; "*And he said unto him, Lord thou knowest all* "*things, thou knowest that I love thee.*" Here observe, Peter's grief must be bridled, whilst he breaks out in rapturous adoration of the king of saints. He ascribes divinity, as conjoined with the man Christ Jesus. "*Lord* (says he) *thou knowest* "*all things.*" Now Omniscience is an attribute of God.

If Christ be not essentially God; surely Peter were the vilest idolater under the sun. But with Thomas I would cry out to Christ, "*My Lord* "*and my God.*" Nor do I count it idolatry to pay my Saviour all divine honors. Now what a blessed thing to be able to add with Peter; "*Thou knowest that I love thee.*" Behold then, the glorious issue of Peter's love. An honorable and laborious office is given him in the world, an honorable and glorious death crowns the whole. The remarks I shall make on these two heads may finish the whole.

First, An honorable and laborious office is given him in the world. This every minister and every Christian, have also in their degrees; all have ho-

norable places assigned them in this world. Ministers especially are called to feed the flock of God. But I will speak of them together under the character of Peter. As oft as Peter had denied the shepherd, so oft is he called to feed the sheep. Now he also was a sheep of Christ's fold, and must be fed also by that food with which he fed his brethren. The apostle Paul reasons thus to Timothy. "*Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; "continue in them; for in doing this, thou shalt "both save thyself and them that hear thee,*" 1 Tim. iv. 16. Now for this flock we find Peter exceedingly zealous, as we may find by consulting a few particulars in the Acts of the Apostles.

No sooner are the disciples met at Jerusalem after the resurrection of Christ, than Peter begins: one of Christ's flock must fill the place of the apostate Judas; Peter speaks; Matthias is chosen.

On the day of Pentecost, Peter first testifies the descent of the Spirit, by observing and explaining the nature of its down coming on the flock of Christ, as foretold in Joel's prophecies. Preaches Christ with such power of the Spirit, that three thousand are converted, and such as should be saved are added to the church.

In the beautiful gate of the temple, Peter is the honored instrument of bringing to the fold of his Lord, one of his flock; a lame man begging alms of those that entered into the temple: read his powerful words to the poor cripple; "*Silver and*

"*gold have I none, but such as I have, give I*
"*thee: in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth,*
"*rise up and walk,*" Acts iii. 6.

Further, Peter is the honored instrument of shewing the other sheep of Christ, which were not of this fold, even the Gentiles, John x. 16, the way to their great Shepherd through the influence of the Spirit; so that "*They of the circumcision*
"*which believed, were astonished, as many as*
"*came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles*
"*also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost,*" Acts x. 45.

Again, by means of Peter it was prevented, that the yoke of circumcision and the observance of the law of Moses, should be laid on these Gentile-sheep of Christ, which yoke Peter appealed to the Jews themselves, as being such as, "*neither we*
"*nor our father's were able to bear,*" xv. 10. But of this enough, to prove that Peter and the ministers of Christ, are set up to build up and establish the sheep of Christ.

Now this is in all ages a laborious office; Satan and his emissaries are always endeavouring to rob the sheepfold, and many even of Christ's flock, are for a time led away by the allurements of the devil, to the great grief of the pastors of God's flock. But the event will be honorable: for God's pastors if they thus care indeed for the flock, will be owned at last and rewarded with the flock, whilst

this meed of praise, shall be given them by the chief shepherd; "*Thou hast been faithful in a* "*few things, enter thou into the joy of thy* "*Lord.*"

It will be honorable also to Christ, who hath declared that he hath laid down his life for his sheep, and that Satan shall never pluck one of the same, John x.; and hath promised that of all that the Father hath given him, he will lose nothing, but will raise them up to life everlasting at the last day.

If we observe the parables of our Lord, we may find that he himself divided the world at large into sheep and goats, of which he observed, that the first should possess everlasting life, and the last endure torments everlasting. His own words are, "*I lay down my life for the sheep;*" and he further declares, that all that the Father hath given to him are his, shall come unto him, and shall possess everlasting life. Now how honorable is this to Christ, disappointed not of his people: they all for whom he hath died, shall share the saving efficacy of his blood, and possess that life, which was hidden in Christ for them before the world was. Can we wonder then that the wicked are turned into hell, when their sins not being atoned for, or washed away by the blood of Christ, the justice of God requires and dooms them to suffer in their own persons the pains of hell for ever?

Now lastly, an honorable and glorious death crowns the whole.

Mark the true Christian, rearing his head, amongst the seed of Satan, amongst false professors and false brethren, with here and there a traveller, following the same path to everlasting glory. His life is a defensive warfare against his external foes, and an offensive warfare against the foes that lurk within. He hates Satan and all his seed with a perfect hatred, and like holy David, counts them his enemies. But he hates worse his own sinful self, whose workings of unbelief, blasphemy and rebellion against God, fill him with shame and confusion of face. Yet he rejoices that to the Lord, belong loving-kindness, and tender mercies for ever. His sins deserve the eternal hidings of God's face. Yet Christ hath borne his sins, and taken the curse away. He feels the treachery, deceitful and backsliding propensities of his own heart, yet he believes the language of Christ; "*My grace is sufficient for* "*thee.*" He fears the force of temptation, the power of trial, and the snares of the devil. Yet he believes the voice of God in his word; "*When* "*thou passest through the waters, I will be with* "*thee; and through the rivers, they shall not* "*overflow thee; when thou walkest through the* "*fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the* "*flame kindle upon thee,*" Isaiah xliii. 2. He fears the sharpness of death, and dreads dishonoring his Lord in a dying hour. But Christ says, "*Be* "*thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a* "*crown of life,*" Rev. ii. 10. Now in regard to

these terrors in the heart of God's people, do they not generally arise from the remains of unbelief lurking within them. Yet it pleaseth God to drive this unbelief entirely away, before his people leave this vale of tears. No doubting of interest in Christ, no fears of acceptance in him, shall close their dying eyes, to make them uncertainly enter into the presence of their judge. It is true God's people have sometimes had a cloud hang over them till the last; but grace hath dispersed it at the last, to give a bright prospect of the scene to which they were hasting. Some of God's people have so desponded till the last, that they have hinted to surviving friends, that unless they made a sign in nature's struggles, they who were left behind should believe they had not departed in peace. But in nature's last struggles they have made the sign; faith hath gathered the scattered embers of life together for their last essay, the parting signal is made by the once doubting spirit, whilst the voice adds her last earthly chorus to the joy that now fills the heart, and with an expiring groan, adds "*Lord Jesus receive my spirit.*"

Surely if any language suits best a believer's dying breath, it is the commendation of his soul into *his* hands, who poured out his own soul into the hands of justice, when he became a sin-offering for an elect people. May these words close my dying eyes, as I finish my christian warfare here below, "*For I know whom I have believed, and I am*

"*persuaded that he is able to keep that which I* "*have committed unto him against that day,*" 2 Tim. i. 12.

To close these remarks, I must contemplate a scene, which no mortal now in this world hath ever witnessed, I mean the joys of everlasting bliss at God's right hand. That beloved disciple who leaned on Christ's bosom whilst here below, and was favoured by his Lord in being inspired of his Spirit, to write the last authentic record of what should happen to the church in all ages; that beloved disciple could exclaim, "*It doth not yet ap-* "*pear, what we shall be; but we know that* "*when he shall appear, we shall be like him,* "*for we shall see him as he is,*" 1 John iii. 2. It doth not yet appear; how then can I tell the sum; yet a shadow of that exceeding glory is given to wanderers here below. The company we shall meet in another world is told us; there we shall see "*an innumerable company of angels.*" Is not this enough? "*The general assembly and church* "*of the first-born, which are written in Heaven.*" Will not this suffice? No. All is nothing where God is wanting, "*God the judge of all,*—(once a judge condemning us, but then adjudging us worthy of eternal life for Christ's sake), *and the* "*spirits of just men made perfect.*" Surely this is enough! No. The fountain of all this bliss is yet absent: Where is Christ? Christ is present there; we shall see—"*Jesus the Mediator of the*

"*new covenant, and the blood of sprinkling, that* "*speaketh better things than that of Abel,*" Heb. xii. 22 to 24. Oh! this is bliss consummate; yet we cannot tell how great it will be. But observe further, this joy is a fulness of joy. Hearken how an old Testament saint rejoiceth at this; "*in thy* "*presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand* "*there are pleasures for evermore,*" Psalm xvi. 11. Nor shall the wicked be there to interrupt the harmony of the scene: for "*There shall in no* "*wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither* "*whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a* "*lie; but they which are written in the Lamb's* "*Book of life,*" Rev. xxi. 27. We know not except by faith, how much *we* shall really love God, who shall taste for ever of his grace, and rejoice for ever before him; for in our present state, we can conceive actually of no state which is unalloyed with flesh and blood; but when we by death are changed, so as we shall become like the angels of Heaven; then like the angels in Heaven we shall perfectly praise, and unceasingly adore, and sing eternal Hallelujah's to God and the Lamb. Nay, we have ten thousand times more cause to adore unceasingly than angels have. Angels never sinned, except those who are now in hell: who never had a call to repentance; nor ever have reason for a gleam of hope, that they shall escape that place of torment, where Christ "*Hath reserved* them *in* "*everlasting chains under darkness, unto the*

"*judgment of the great day,*" Jude 7. Whereas mankind, all and every one of whom have sinned and come short of the glory of God, is looked upon in the eternal counsels of the Father. A seed is chosen out of them, who shall serve him. These are looked upon in their blood, and whilst in their blood are bidden to live: for them the Son of God, becomes man in all things, except sin, and at last comes, bleeds and dies; for them he lives to intercede, and them he has pledged himself to redeem, from the curse of an offended law and from the pains of hell for ever. Now what will be the employment of such redeemed souls for ever? Ascriptions surely of praise to God and the Lamb. To God. "*Great and marvelous are thy works,* "*Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy* "*ways, thou king of saints. Who shall not fear* "*thee O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou* "*only art holy,*" Rev. xv. 3, 4. To the Lamb. "*The four beast, and the four and twenty elders,* "*fell down before the Lamb, having every one of* "*them harps, and golden vials full of odours,* "*which are the prayers of the saints. And they* "*sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to* "*take the book, and to open the seals thereof:* "*for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to* "*God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and* "*tongue, and people, and nation,*" Rev. v. 8, 9. "*Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to re-* "*ceive power, and riches, and wisdom, and*

"*strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing,*" ver. 12.

Lastly, this blessed Jesus ever liveth to give this happiness to, and eternally to dwell with his people. "*I am he that liveth, and was dead; and "behold, I am alive for evermore.* Amen," Rev. i. 18. And to all Christ's people himself hath declared, "*I will come again, and receive you to "myself; that where I am, there ye may be also,*" John xiv. 3. And "*Because I live ye shall live "also,*" John xiv. 19.

CONCLUDING REMARKS.

THUS have I endeavoured to comment upon the words of my Lord Jesus Christ. O that it had fallen into better hands. But if he hath filled my earthen vessel, oh! that it may be emptied in praises to his name.

Christ is the Amen, the true and faithful witness; he hath sealed his testimony with his blood. Of him the world was not worthy; for when he came to his own, his own received him not. Nor could they know him till he was pleased to put his Spirit into their hearts, so that under a heartfelt conviction, they were led to cry with the once unbelieving Thomas, "*My Lord and my God.*" Thus he continues yet to work in the hearts of his chosen. Hath he thus won my heart? What shall

I do? Shall I slight his testimony, deny his divinity, as thousands do? Nay I cannot—necessity is laid upon me. A pleasing necessity, a violence I love: breaking not down my will as a fettered slave, but bending my will, and by diverting it into a new channel, making it a most delightful employment to my freed soul, to love and adore him. Some will say, how know I so clearly my interest in Christ, my being in him, and he being in me? I answer, by the rules laid down in his word; "*Hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the "Spirit which he hath given us,*" 1 John iii. 24. And further, we may know whether the Spirit of God resteth upon us, by feeling within us those fruits of the Spirit, which St. Paul enumerates in the 5th chapter of Galatians, as dwelling in the seed of Christ. Now these dwell not in us perfectly, by reason of the infirmities of our own flesh, but they are the earnest of perfection, when the soul shall by death be separated from a body of dishonor, to fill eternally a body of glory, fashioned like to Christ's body, by that power whereby he is able to subdue all things unto himself.

Now not only is it comfortable for every Christian, to make his calling and election sure to his own comfort here below; but it is the very pride of hell, and device of the devil, to keep God's chosen, ignorant of the same as long as he can, though let this be remembered, which has been the remark of many pious men, that the enemies of the church

are in the hands of her best friends; and of this may we feel continually convinced through the renewing operation of the Holy Spirit. "Moreover (says the celebrated Martin Luther) God "hath also sent the Spirit of his Sonne into our "hearts, as Paule here sayth. But Christ is most "certaine in his Spirit that he pleaseth God, &c. "therefore we also having the same Spirit of "Christ, must be assured that we are under grace, "for his sake which is most assured. This I have "said, concerning the inward testimony, whereby "a Christian man's heart ought to be fully per"swaded that he is under grace, and hath the Holy "Ghost. Now the outward signes, (as before I "have said) are, gladly to heare of Christ, to preach "and teach Christ, to render thanks unto him, to "praise him, to confesse him, yea with the losse of "goods and life: moreover to do our duty accord"ing to our vocation as we are able; to do it (I "say) in faith, joy, &c. Not to delight in sinne, "nor to thrust ourselves into another man's voca"tion, but to attend upon our own, to helpe our "needy brother, to comfort the heavy hearted, "&c. By these signes as by certaine effects and "consequences, we are fully assured and confirmed "that we are in God's favor. The wicked also do "imagine, that they have the same signes, but they "have nothing lesse.

"Here we may see what great infirmity is yet in "the faith of the godly. For if we could be fully

" perswaded that we are under grace, that our sins
" are forgiven, that we have the Spirit of Christ,
" that we are the children of God; then doubt-
" lesse we should be joyfull, and thankful to God
" for this inestimable gift. But because we feel
" contrary motions, that is to say feare, doubtful-
" nesse, anguish and heavinesse of heart, and such
" like, therefore we cannot assure ourselves there-
" of: yea our conscience judgeth it a great pre-
" sumption and pride to challenge this glorie.

" Wherefore let every man so practise with him-
" selfe, that his conscience may be fully assured
" that he is under grace, and that his person and
" his workes do please God. And if he feele in
" himselfe any wavering or doubting, let him ex-
" ercise his faith, and wrestle against this doubting;
" and let him labor to attaine more strength and
" assurance of faith, so that he may be able to
" say, I know that I am accepted, and that I have
" the Holy Ghost; not for mine owne worthi-
" nes, my worke, my merite, but for Christ's sake,
" who of his inestimable love towards us, made
" himselfe thrall and subject to the law, and tooke
" away the sinnes of the world. In him do I be-
" lieve. If I be a sinner and erre, he is righteous
" and cannot erre. Moreover, I gladly heare,
" reade, sing and write of him, and I desire no-
" thing more than that this gospel may be knowne,
" to the whole world, and that many may be con-
" verted unto him.

"These things do plainly witnesse, that the "Holy Ghost is present with us and in us. For "such things are not wrought in the heart by man's "strength, nor gotten by man's industry or travell, "but are obtained by Christ alone, who first maketh "us righteous by the knowledge of himselfe in his "holy gospell, and afterwards he createth a new "heart in us, bringeth forth new motions, and "giveth unto us that assurance whereby we are "perswaded that we please the Father for his "sake. Also he giveth us a true judgement where-"by we prove and trie those things which before "we knew not, or else altogether despised. It "behoveth us therefore to wrastle against this "doubting, that we may daily overcome it more "and more, and attaine to a ful perswasion and "certainty of God's favor towards us, rooting out "of our hearts, this cursed opinion, that a man "ought to doubt of the grace and favor of God: "which hath infected the whole world." Luther's Commentarie on the Galathians, Lond. 1618. chap. iv. folio 189, 190.

Now is it not comfortable to the soul to think thus highly of the grace of God in Christ Jesus toward it? What can more carry it out in holy fervor, or boldness in prayer at a throne of grace, than the thoughts of an upholding hand, continually bearing it up by divine power, amidst all sins and infirmities for the honor of Christ and for his sake.

It has been observed that predestination is very conducive to the life of prayer, and certainly by considering that *the gifts of God are without repentance,* we may be emboldened to ask of God, those blessings which are pre-ordained as a given lot in a measure to all whom he hath loved in Christ Jesus.

Now this assured sense of the grace and favor of God can alone make us desire Heaven, and make us long to be with Christ which is far better.

Nor is this longing sinful, provided it leadeth us to no impatience to depart, and provided it be exercised with a due dependance on the providential dealings of God, humbly believing, and joyfully expecting his calling them away at his own appointed hour.

Lord Jesus help us to wait thy call with patience; to wait till thou art pleased to call us to thy beloved bosom, as unto a haven of eternal rest. Help us to wait patiently our Father's full and final approbation, till thou shalt give us through the merits of thy blood and spotless righteousness, to behold a Father's face without a veil between.

Thy chariot wheels will not longer tarry. Time is rolling away as a scroll before thee. Thy seed is ripening for eternal glory. Thy mansions are preparing for those that love thee. Heaven opens before thee and the Father smiles. Soon thou

wilt bid it open to us, and God shall wipe away all tears from our eyes. We hear thy last words and joyfully believe them.

He who testifieth these things saith,

Surely I come quickly,

Our hearts reply

Amen; Even so, Come

LORD JESUS.

THE END.

W. Nicholson, Printer, Warner Street.

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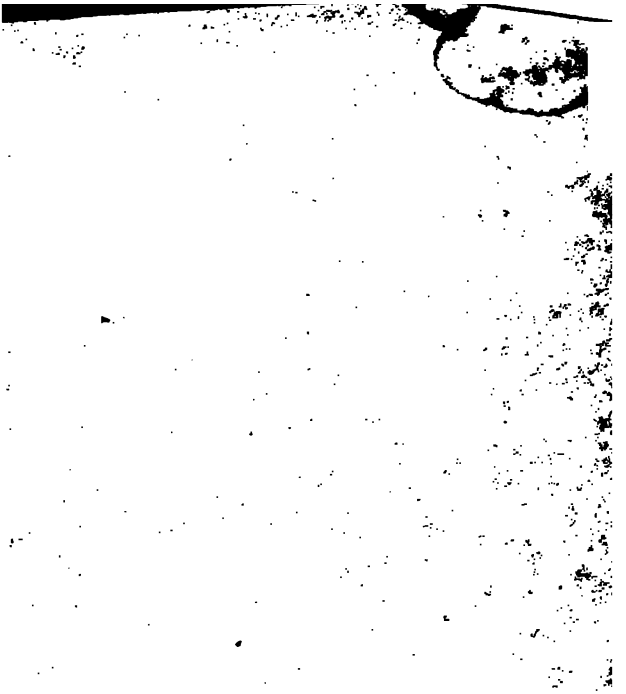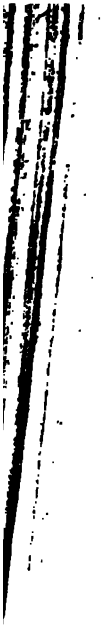
Page 5, line 28, *for* Targuens, *read* Targums.
21, 4, *for* further, still, *read* further still.
64, 20, *for* take of, *read* take of it.
71, 11, *for* how it would, *read* how would it.
72, 21, *for* faith, in love upon, *read* faith in, love upon.
97, 28, *for* two saith, he, *read* two, saith he.
206, 26, *for* if they bear it, *read* to them that bear it.
208, 20, *for* Cnrist, *read* Christ.
245, 13, *for* that we live, *read* that we may live.
246, 5, *for* devotions is, *read* devotions are.
247, 14, *for* τετραγραμμαλογ, *read* τετραγραμματον.
255, 11, *for* in such seasons, *read* in seasons of suspension and doubt.
309, 2, *for* as thousands do, *read* as thousands who have not his Spirit, do.